

A  
**WARNING**  
GIVEN TO  
**Secure Sinners,**  
TO  
Prepare for *Judgment,*  
TO  
Flee from *Wrath to Come,*  
AND  
Turn from *All Sin ;*  
BUT  
Especially the Sin which does *most*  
*easily beset them.*

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By *NATHANAEL VINCENT, M. A.*  
Minister of the Gospel.

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*Ezek. 33. 7. O Son of Man, I have set thee a Watchman  
unto the house of Israel, therefore thou shalt hear the Word  
at my Mouth, and warn them from Me.*

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**LICENSED,**

*March 17<sup>th</sup>. 1688.*

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WARRING



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
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# THE Epistle to the READER.

Reader !

**W**Hen I Preached these following Sermons, I had not the least thought of Publishing them : They were taken from my Mouth by a dexterous and nimble hand that wrote almost every Word I utter'd : I was very much solicited to Print them ; and the Notes being written out fair, and brought to me, I have look'd them over, and now they are presented to thee, with a sincere Design that they may be beneficial to thee, and not without Hope they will be so. The Subjects here handled are awakening ; and in this secure Age, what need is there of startling Sermons ! At this day in England, there is work enough for many a Roanerges, for ten thousand Sons of Thunder.

The guilt and defilement of Sin, proves it to be Mans greatest Enemy ; but because it stupifies and hardens those that have been guilty of it, it is likely the more effectually to destroy them ; for the Disease not being felt, the Remedy is neglected. A spiritual Lethargy is the general Distemper, most continue fast asleep in Sin, till Hell wakes them, but then it is too late. Though Christ has the Key of Hell, that Saviour releases none that once are thrown into it. Miserable World, because it lies in Wickedness ! more miserable, because it apprehends not how miserable its Wickedness has made it ! because it fears not, it endeavours not to escape Eternal Misery !

Oh dreadful Day of God that's coming ! when all Apostate Angels that are now in Chains of Darkness,

## The Epistle, &c.

shall be brought forth and judged, and dealt with as the Enemies of God and Man: These Principalities and Powers will be overpowr'd, and utterly unable to avoid the severity of their Righteous and Almighty Judge: How much evil have they done, and still they are doing more! of what Woe and Torment are they capable!

And all those of the Children of Men who have been led Captive by Satan at his Pleasure, that have resolved rather to be destroyed themselves, than that the works of the Devil should be destroyed in them, 'tis just that they should, but how sad will it be for them, to share in Torment with him! Sin will have a very bad end; all that are gone into another World, are sensible of it, though few in this World perceive it. When the Servants of Sin have received their Wages, which is Death; then they will know to their sorrow, what kind of Master they have served, and what Pains they foolishly took for that Misery, which they should have taken Pains to have prevented.

Reader!

Be wise, believe and fear, and take the Watchman's Warning: The Sword in the Hand of the living Eternal God will give a dreadful and a deadly Blow; to fall under his Vengeance will be fearful; and thy Blood lying upon thy own Head, it will lye very heavy, and upon this will follow everlasting heaviness and anguish. Oh fear the Wrath to come before 'tis come, and fly from Sin, and come to God by Jesus Christ, a Saviour both from Sin and Wrath, and a Saviour to the uttermost. Better Counsel than this cannot be taken by thy self, or given by any to thee.

N. V.

ROM. XIV. 10. latter part.

—We shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

**I** Have been lately Discoursing concerning *Conversion*: The Digression I make this day, is subservient to my great Design, which is the Conversion and Salvation of this Assembly: It infinitely concerns you all to turn to God, for quickly you will have a *Summons* to come unto *his Bar*, and how soon that Summons may be given, who can tell? Those that *least think on't*, and least care to be *provided and ready* for it, perhaps may have it soonest; and if the Converts themselves, as the Scripture tells us, are *scarcely saved*; Oh where shall the Unconverted and the Sinner appear? I wish that *I may Preach* and you may *Hear*, as those who do really believe we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

The Apostle in these words speaks enough, one would think, to startle the most stupid Conscience, to make the most secure, like *Felix* to tremble; to awaken even those that are dead in Sins and Trespases. Let me tell you, the *Devils themselves* are none of them *Atheists* and *Infidels*,

del's, they all believe this Text, and the thoughts of Judgment make *them tremble*; therefore if any Sinner remains fearless and unsensible, he does in this respect *outsin* the very *Apostate Angels*.

There are three things observable in the Words.

1. Here is a *Judgment Seat*, the most glorious that ever *was*, the *last* that ever *will be*; from this *Tribunal* there can be *no Appeal* unto any other, the Sentence whether of *Absolution* or *Condemnation* that will here be pass't, will *never be revers'd*, but stand firm unto Eternity.

2. You are told *who is to be the Judge*, he is the *Lord Jesus Christ*. We read of a twofold Appearing of Christ, his *first* and his *second* Appearing: He came at first in the *form of a Servant*, he was *to be made Sin*, and he *was made Sin and a Curse* for us: He *gave himself for us*, that he might *redeem us from all Iniquity*; and if he had given *other and less than himself*, it would not have satisfied. The Churches Sins could be done away by no *lower a Priest*, than Christ the *greatest and highest* of all; and the Priest was *fain himself to be*, and that a *most voluntary Sacrifice*. He appear'd at first to *put away sin by the Sacrifice of himself*; but when he comes the second time, to Judge the World, he will appear after another kind of manner: From the *beginning* of the World, there hath not been *such a sight* as there *will be at the end of it*. The Lord Jesus will come with a *Power* which none can withstand, with *great Glory*, which will fill the Saints with Joy; for they shall appear in glory with him, but will be exceedingly amazing and confounding to all those who were the Enemies of his Kingdom.

3. Here

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3. Here are the *Persons* that are to stand before this Judge; if you ask, *Who are they?* I Answer by another Question, *Who, or where are the Persons that shall be exempted?* All from the beginning of the World to the end of it, All from the first *Man* that was made, unto the last of his Posterity that shall be born, must stand before Christ the Lord, that from his Mouth they may receive their final and eternal Doom. There is a great difference between *standing before the Judgment Seat*, and *standing in Judgment*; the former implies being made to appear at the Tribunal, the latter implies being *Acquitted* there. The Psalmist tells us, That the *ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment*, nor *Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous*, Psal. i. 5. yet all of these shall be forced to appear at the Bar of God, there they shall stand trembling, expecting the terrible Sentence of Condemnation: And Oh what a *hideous* *Onery* will the whole multitude of Wicked and Reprobate Ones make, when without hope of Mercy they are adjudged to *endless Misery*!

*Doct.* The Doctrine I raise from the Words is this, *All shall be Judged by Christ at the great Day*: As certainly as you are all here, so certainly at that day you shall appear at his Judgment Seat: Death is not more certain, nay, 'tis not so certain as Judgment. The Apostle tells us that *all shall not Dye*, for some shall be *Changed*; but even these that are changed, though they *scape the Grave*, they shall stand at the Tribunal, and give account of themselves unto God. This Doctrine concerning Judgment, was Preached early in the

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World;

World; we find twas Published before the Flood of Noah, as you may see, Jude v. 14, 15. where you have the summe of a Sermon, but a very terrible one, Preached by Enoch the seventh from Adam; Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard speeches which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him. Under the Mosaical Dispensation, the Children of Israel heard the same Doctrine: That great Prince and Preacher Solomon, thus concludes his Book of Ecclesiastes, having displayed the Creatures Vanity, having taught Man his Interest and Duty, To fear God, and to keep his Commandments; he closes with these words, Chap. 12. ult. God will bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil: And how plainly does the Apostle Paul speak to the same purpose, 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad; knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, we perswade Men.

In the handling of this Doctrine, this is the Method I shall observe.

First, I shall Discourse concerning Him that is to be the Judge.

Secondly, I shall speak concerning the Persons that are to be judged.

Thirdly, Concerning the things that shall be brought into Judgment.

Fourthly, I shall demonstrate the Certainty of this Judgment.

And

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And then in the last Place make *Application*.

In the first Place I am to Discourse concerning the Judge, and the Text plainly tells us, that the Judge is *Christ*: The Father I grant, is said to judge, 1 Pet. 1. 17. *If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every mans work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear*: Yet it is said in another place, The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, Joh. 5. 22. How shall these Scriptures be reconciled? The reconciliation is easie, thus; the Father judges, because the *Authority of Judging* belongs to him, because he does *Consent unto the Sons Judgment*, and has ordained him to Judge the World in Righteousness; the truth is, the Father Judges all, but 'tis *mediately* by Jesus Christ: And yet in another sense the Father judges not, because Christ the Son, the second Person in the Godhead *alone*, was incarnate and manifested in the Flesh, and He alone will *visibly Judge* the World at the great approaching Day.

These four things may be observed concerning Christ the Judge.

He is a *Saviour* to the uttermost.

He is the *Only Saviour*.

He is *Lord* of all.

And as such a Lord, he will come with a most glorious Attendance.

1. Christ the Judge is a *Saviour* to the uttermost, and really at the Judgment-day he will compleat the Churches *Salvation*; he began it here in this World, and still is carrying it on; but  
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the last day will be the day, in which he will put his *last Hand* to this Work, and make it perfect, Heb. 9. 28. *Christ was once offered up to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin to Salvation*; then Salvation shall be consummate, the whole of it shall be wrought, nothing of Sin or the sad effects of it shall remain, nothing that shall cause the least frown in the Face of God to eternity: Death will be swallowed up in Victory, the whole Man will be glorious and immortal; Christ will then have compleated his whole Design upon all his Saints and Members, he will have made them as holy and happy as he did intend to make them, he will indeed present his Church a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but it shall be all holy, and its Beauty without the least blemish, Eph. 5. 27.

2. Christ the Judge is the *Only Saviour*, therefore those that are *Condemn'd* by Him, 'tis in vain for them to expect Salvation from any other: Christ is the *only Foundation-stone* on which all that build shall stand; other Builders are foolish, and build upon the sand, and what they build will fall, and great will be the fall of it. They that are not interested in the Lord Jesus by Faith, that are not Justified by his Blood, who besides can save them from Wrath? those whose Iniquities are not done away by his offering up of himself without spot to God, there can be found no other Sacrifice for their sins, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery indignation that shall devour the Adversaries: And how dreadful



ful will it be to be Sentenced to Death and Damnation; by the only Author of Salvation and Life! they that by his Mouth shall be doom'd to eternal Destruction, that Destruction will be made ten thousand times the *so*rer by *eternal Desperation*: Alas, what Hope can be left; when the Lamb of God, who alone *can take away Sin*, shall be so full of Wrath, as for ever to reject and cast away the Sinner?

3. Christ the Judge is *Lord of all*; this is a truth that the Tongue of an Angel did Proclaim, *Luk. 2. 11.* a truth that every Tongue should confess, *Phil. 2. 11.* that every Heart ought to believe, and which the most unbelieving and obstinate at last shall be made to know. Christ hath on his *Vesture*, and on his *Thigh*, this Name written, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, *Rev. 19. 16.* He has all Power in his hand, things in Heaven, and Earth, and under the Earth are subject to him: Those that are wise do willingly bow before him, and they who will not bow, he can easily break and dash them to pieces. A mighty Lord Christ is, at whose Command *Death shall deliver again all* that for so many years he had imprisoned in the *Grave*; he has indeed the *Key of Death and Hell* too, *Rev. 1. 18.* both are under his Power; at his Command also *the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, the Earth also and the works therein shall be burnt up*: There is no dealing with this Judge by way of resistance; it concerns us all to be diligent, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless, *2 Pet. 3. 10, 14.*

4. Christ

4. Christ the Judge will come with a *most glorious Attendance*: How awakening to the World will the *Voice of the Arch-Angel and the Trump of God* be! Christ will appear with a light far above the brightness of the Sun, not a Member of his but shall shine like that glorious Luminary, *Mat. 13. 43. Then shall the righteous shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*: And what a spectacle will all the Saints together be, as so many millions of Suns shining at Once, and their Lord in the height of Glory at the head of them! He will be revealed also with his *mighty Angels*; these excellent Spirits at his Command, *ministred* unto his Members on Earth, and they will wait upon the Head at the day of his *appearing and his Kingdom*. There is much Work for the Angels to do at the Worlds end, they are compared to *Reapers* that are safely to gather the *Wheat*, and to bind the *Tares* in bundles for the fire, *Mat. 13. 41, 42. The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* The greatest Train of Nobility and Courtiers that attend at the Coronation of the highest Emperor on Earth, are but a poor shew to an *innumerable Company of Angels*; for all in Heaven will be with Christ at Judgment, to do him honour who is indeed the *Head of all Principality and Power*. Thus of the Judge.

In the second Place I am to speak of the *Persons that are to be judged*: The Text takes in *All*, there-

therefore none shall be exempted, and none in a vain and foolish imagination should exempt themselves : It will be a *general Assize*, at which all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* shall appear.

1. The *highest and greatest of Men* will be brought to Judgment : Death makes bold with *them* as well as others, and enters the stateliest Palaces, the strongest Forts, as well as the Cottages of the meanest. The Rulers and Conquerors of the World, that *caused Terror in the land of the living*, yet they are made to bear the shame of their *Weakness and Mortality*; they are brought down to the Pit, their Swords are laid under their Heads, their Hands being able to hold them no longer, *Ezek. 32. 27.* And if Death is not afraid to seize them, surely *Christ* will not be afraid to Judge them. This mighty Lord regards not the persons of *Princes*, nor the rich more than the poor; *Job 34. 19.* I have said ye are Gods, speaking to the great Ones of the World, but ye shall dye like Men, *Psal. 82. 7.* Princes are greater Worms, other Men are lesser, but all must call *Corruption Father*; and when they come to stand before *Christ's* bar, foregoing earthly Dignity will be insignificant, all must stand upon even ground : And truly those great Ones of the World that have abused their Power, and by a bad example drawn many to Sin and to Hell after them, their greatness will but Increase their Account and Misery.

2. As the greatest, so the *Meanest* must be brought to Judgment, though there is never so vast a multitude; God takes notice of them all now, and none of them must think to escape in a crowd  
then :

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*then* : The Apostle speaks plainly of Individuals, *Rom. 14. 12.* So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God : Those that live most private and retired, are under Gods continual Inspection ; they that are of the lowest rank and quality, whom, there are that disdain so much as to look upon, yet God sees them. The Sun shines upon a Mole-hill as well as upon a Mountain, upon a Shrub as well as upon a Cedar, upon a Fly as well as upon an Emperor ; and truly the All-seeing Eye of God beholds the *low* as well as the *high*, and there is not any one of them all, but shall be made to render an account of all his doings.

3. Righteous Ones must stand before Christs Judgment-seat : All his Members must appear before Him their Head, but shall be dealt with after a different manner from others ; Grace and Love makes a difference now, but how highly magnified will the Grace of Christ be in the difference it makes at that Day ? to find Mercy of the Lord in that day, which the Apostle Prays Onesiphorns might find, *2 Tim. 1. 18.* when the greatest part of the World shall with a strong hand, the Ear being deaf to all their cries, be turned into everlasting fire ; this is great Mercy indeed, great as the Heaven is high above the Earth. The Righteous shall appear, but they shall be set at their Lords right hand, to shew his peculiar Favour to them, and they shall joyfully own what that Hand has done for them. Christs Appearing will be glorious, and so will be the appearing of his Saints ; then 'twill be understood what 'tis to be a Saint, *Col. 3. 4.* When Christ who is our life shall

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*shall appear, than shall ye also appear with him in Glory.*

A Question is here started by some, *Whether the Sins of the Righteous shall be then made known?* The Scripture plainly tells us, That when the Sins of such come to be sought for, there shall be none, and that they shall not be found; none of them shall be imputed or laid to their charge, none shall be so discover'd in Judgment, as to rise up in Judgment against them, to Condemn them: But since there will such a light shine at that day that will make all things manifest, both good and evil, suppose the Iniquities of the Righteous should be made known to the whole Creation, such will be their Purity, such will be their Blessedness and Joy, that there will not be the *least room for shame or sorrow* at the discovery: But when all the Sins that have been Forgiven and Purged, shall be revealed, others as well as themselves will be filled with *Wonder at the Blood of Jesus*, and the *powerful Grace of God*.

4. As the Righteous, so the Wicked must stand before Christs Bar; they would fain not come thither, but there is an irresistible Power to force them. The Malefactor who is Condemned for Murther, Rape, or Treason, would fain decline the Judges View, he is Self-condemn'd, and therefore fears the Judges Sentence; but the Gaoler, the Officers compel him to the Bar, where Judgment is given against him to take away his Life. Wicked Men will be horribly afraid to make their Appearance before the Lord Jesus, whose Salvation they have slighted, whose Kingdom and Government they would by no means submit

submit unto; they will wish that their *Bodies* might sleep eternally in their Graves, and never have such a *Resurrection* which will be only to *Damnation*; they will wish rather to be turned into *Nothing*, than to be turned into *Hell*; they will call to the *Rocks* and the *Mountains* to fall upon them, to hide them from the Face of him that sits upon the *Throne*, and from the *Wrath* of the *Lamb*, *Rev. 6. 16.* But will they, nill they, they must appear at his Seat, and see him Eye to Eye, though his Eye will be as a flame of Fire to terrifie them: That just Indignation that sparkles from Christs looks, how will it amaze them! *Rev. 1. 7.* Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every eye shall see him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him, even so Amen; the thing is certain.

5. They that never heard Christs Gospel shall be brought to Judgment: He is to Judge the Church, and the whole World in Righteousness. The State of those that are without the Gospel, is set forth as very sad in Scripture; they are said to be without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World, *Eph. 2. 12.* Yet it seems to me an unwarrantable boldness, to pronounce them *all lost*; since for ought we know, God may help some of them to be faithful in that little he has given them; but however, be it, or be it not so, their Case is so dangerous, that we should be concerned very much for them at present, and Pray that God would make known his saving health among them. The Apostle tells us, what will be the

the Rule of Christ's proceedings with the Heathen, that never heard of the glad-tydings of Salvation; they shall be judged according to the Law and Light of Nature, Rom. 2. 12. *As many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law, and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law; for not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified.*

6. They that have enjoyed the Gospel, and the means of Grace, shall be brought to Judgment; and of all persons that are to be judged, these have largest account to give; and the most Talents to answer for. A poor Heathen, he has but one Talent, the dim Light of nature; but thou that enjoyest the Gospel, hast two, if not five Talents to improve: And where much is given, will not much also be required; you that hear Christ Preached, had need to look to it, that you sincerely obey him now; and that you may stand before him at last; for if you fall in Judgment, you will fall very low. Damnation will be great and extraordinary, where great Salvation has been neglected, Heb. 2. 3. Our Lord Jesus plainly intimates, that there are degrees of Torment in the place of future punishment; there is a blacker Darknes, and a Darknes not quite so dim: there is a cooler and an hotter Hell. Who are those that shall be thrown into the hottest Hell of all? Truly those who heard the Gospel, and were called to repent and believe; but would do neither, Mat. 11. 21, 22, 23, 24. *Woe unto thee Chorazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida, for if the mighty works that were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have Repented long ago in Sack-cloath and Ashes: but I say*



to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of Judgment, than for you. And thou Capernaum, that art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be cast down to Hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment, than for Thee:

In the third place, I am to speak of the things which will be brought into Judgment, and that both with respect to the *Righteous*, and with respect to the *Wicked*.

I begin with the *Righteous*; and concerning these you must know,

1. Their *Sincerity* at the day of Judgment, will be made apparent. All the Sincerity that has been on Earth, will then be own'd and approved; every one shall have an *Euge*, a Commendation, that has been a good and faithful Servant, Mat. 25. 21, 23. The Apostle prays for the *Philippians*, Ch. 1. 10. that they might be Sincere, and without offence till the day of Christ. Sincerity will signifie much in that Day: None will pass for sincere, but those that are so. Not one that has been sincere, but shall be accepted and rewarded. Faithful ones may now possibly be loaded with Reproaches from without; and with Censures from within the Church; but at the great Day, all will be wiped off, 1 Cor. 4. 5. Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord do come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the Counsels of the Hearts, and then shall every Man have praise of God. How many that have been highly esteemed



*esteemed among Men, will be discovered then to have been unsound at Heart; and that the World and Self did act and rule them; tho their Tongues did speak for God, and tho they made a Splendid Profession, that they were his Servants. And how many that have been hardly thought of by Men, will Christ at that day confess before his Father and the Angels? their Censurers at the same time being ashamed and confounded.*

2. There will Cognizance be taken of all the good works of the Righteous. These will follow them into another World, Rev. 14. 13. The Apostle, that he might encourage Believers unto diligence, tells them, Heb. 6. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your Work and Labour of love, which ye have shewed towards his Name.* Good works are rewardable, tho they are not Meritorious: there is no proportion between the work and the reward, but the reward infinitely exceeds, for God himself is the reward of the Saints, and All in all that are in Heaven. There is no intrinsic worth in good works to deserve Heaven; but God has promised Heaven and eternal Life, and is Righteous in bestowing it; but still it must be acknowledged his free Gift, and given through Jesus Christ. Indeed, Mat. 25. 35, 40. mention is made only of works of Charity and Mercy. *I was an Hungred, and ye gave me Meat, Thirsty and ye gave me Drink, I was a Stranger, and ye took me in. I was Naked, and ye cloathed me; Sick, and ye visited me. I was in Prison, and ye came to me.* From hence you are to learn how acceptable such works as these are; and you should be stirr'd up to abound in them; but other works are not excluded; for afterwards our Lord

does only mention the *mercilessness*, and *uncharitable Omissions* of the wicked; and yet 'tis plain from other Scriptures, that their *other Sins* will be punished; their not *knowing God*, their *disobedience to the Gospel of Christ*, 2 Thess. 1. 8.

3. The Sentence which will be past upon them, will be a *Sentence of Absolution*: they shall be absolved and acquitted openly before Men and Angels. All their Sins will be forgotten, and buried; there will be an eternal deliverance from the Curse. With what Admiration, Joy and Triumph will they hear, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World!* Mat. 25. 34. What a Kingdom is that, that never shall be moved! What a Crown is that, that is incorruptible! What gladness will fill their Hearts, when the Crown of Life is put upon their Heads! The Sentence being pronounced, presently 'twill be done according to this Sentence; possession will be taken of the glorious Inheritance, they shall *enter into life Eternal*, Mat. 25. 46. Thus of the Righteous.

I am to speak also concerning the Wicked; and as to these, you must understand,

1. All the *works of wicked men* will be brought into Judgment. All their sinful Deeds will follow them to the Bar of God! they will rise with them, and against them at that Day: when a Sinner shall appear, and all his Drunkenness, his Whoredoms, his unjust and cheating Actions, all his evil Deeds of every sort, shall *surround and appear with him*, before the *Holy and Righteous Judge!* How will he be amazed at the *sight* of all his Transgressions! How will he tremble to hear how loud they cry  
for

for Vengeance upon him ! Not a deed of Darkneſs, but then will be brought to light, to his greater confuſion !

2. Not only the *Works* of the Wicked, but their very *Words* ſhall all be accounted for. The Judge himſelf ſpeaks this very plainly, *Mat. 12. 36. But I ſay unto you, that every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.* By idle words may be meant words uſeleſs and unprofitable to the Speakers and to the Hearers ; or idle and vain, according to the Hebrew uſe, may ſignifie, *false, deceitful, lying.* God does hear all words at preſent, *Pſal. 139. 4. There is not a word in my Tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knoweſt it altogether.* And words which very much declare what moſt abounds in the Heart, muſt be anſwerd for at laſt. And if unprofitable talk will then be condemned, how ſad will be the Caſe of all obſcene and filthy Speakers ! of all egregious Lyars ! of all injurious Slanderers and Back-biters ! of all Blaſphemers, curſing curſed Swearers ! of all whoſe impious Tongues have made bold with the *Blood and Wounds* of God their Judge, and inſtead of ſerious praying, have moſt preſumptuouſly called upon, and dared God to Damn them !

3. As the works and words, ſo the *Thoughts* of wicked men ſhall be brought into Judgment. Thoughts are Sins, and need forgivenes ; and ought to be repented of. Memorable is that which *Simon Peter* ſays to *Simon Magus*, *Act. 8. 22. Repent therefore of this thy wickedneſs, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy Heart may be forgiven thee.* If theſe are not repented of and pardon'd, alas, theſe alſo muſt be charged upon Sinners ; vaſtly to the increaſing of

their punishment. How innumerable are the Thousands of thousands, the Millions of Millions of vain and wicked thoughts, desires and lustings that have lodged in the Hearts of the ungodly! The heart-searcher sees every one of them; and will make them know at the last day, that he remembers all. Proud and Self-conceited Thoughts, and touring imaginations; impure and lascivious Thoughts, and inward boyling of Concupiscence; insatiable Covetousness, and eager projects for *filthy gain*; the stirrings of Envy, Malice, Anger and Revenge; the Judge will take notice of all; for he *knows what is in Man*, Joh. 2.25. It will be a *large Bill of Inditement*, where Deeds, Words and Thoughts are all written down from first to last, and not so much as *one* forgotten. The opening of the *Book of Gods remembrance* where all are recorded, will be very amazing.

4. The Sentence that will be past upon the wicked, will be unconceivably full of horror, Mat. 25. 41. Then shall he say to them on the Left-hand, *Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* For Him, who is the way to come to God, to say *Depart!* to depart from Christ, the Sinners only *Hope and Saviour!* to depart with a *Curse!* to depart into *Fire*, the Extremity of Torment! to depart into *everlasting Fire!* to be tormented without any intermission or end! to be for ever in such evil and hateful Company, as *Devils and damned Angels!* this is woful beyond all utterance! And this Sentence as soon as pass'd, will be put in Execution. Now indeed, such is the patience of God, *Sentence against an evil work is not speedily Executed*; and therefore such is their *Maligni-*

ty and Ingratitude, *the Heart of the Sons of men is fully set in them to do Evil*, Eccles. 8. 11. But at the great day, as soon as the wicked are Sentenced, they will be sent, and forced to go away into everlasting Punishment, Mat. 25. ult. the words *κόλασις αἰώνιον*, everlasting Punishment or Torment, are remarkable; for here it is necessarily imply'd, that the wicked shall certainly be to Eternity, that they may be Punished and Tormented to Eternity; and they shall be sensible (else it would not be Torment) of the Punishment they undergo. By eternal Destruction, you are not to understand eternal Annihilation, or being turned for ever into Nothing: for if a wicked Man should altogether cease to be, he must needs also cease to be punished. For 'tis no more a Punishment to be nothing to Eternity, than it can be called a Punishment to have been nothing from Eternity. Wicked men must be for ever, and alas they must bear for ever the Lord's Vengeance and Indignation. I speak thus terribly, not without bowels of Compassion towards you. I would fain fright you by telling you of Wrath, and the Vengeance of eternal Fire, that you may never, never feel it.

In the Fourth place, I am to demonstrate the certainty of this Judgment. If Faith concerning it were but more strong; what an Influence would it have upon the Hearts and Lives of them that do believe it! The Arguments to prove a future Judgment are these.

1. Are there not fears of this Judgment impress'd even upon natural Conscience? What's the reason, that when Men commit the most secret wickedness, that is very unlikely to be known; there is notwith-

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standing a *dread* upon their Spirits? The true reason is, Conscience tells them there is a God, that sees what Man does not see, and that he will judge and punish the wickedness of which Man takes no notice. This Doctrine of a Judgment to come, of future Rewards and Punishments, is written in the Heart of Man by Nature, and he is fain to offer great violence to his own Soul, before he can wear off what is written there; and tho a Sinner become ordinarily very Stupid and Atheistical; yet the thoughts and fears of Judgment, will sometimes, in spite of him return upon him. The Apostle speaks of *Conscience bearing witness, and Thoughts accusing and excusing*; and then presently speaks of the Day when God shall judge the *Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ*, Rom. 2. 15, 16. Conscience judges at present, and hints a future judgment.

2. There is not *such a Discrimination made in this World, between the Righteous and the Wicked*, as is suitable to the difference that Grace has made between them: Therefore there is a Day coming, when there will be such a Discrimination. Solomon tells us, that in the course of Divine Providence at present, *no Man can know either Love or Hatred by all that is before him. All things fall alike to all; there is one Event to the Righteous and to the Wicked, to the good, to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that Sacrificeth, and him that Sacrificeth not; as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that Swareth, as he that feareth an Oath*, Eccles. 9. 1, 2. Nay, often times the worst of men have in this present Life the best on't. We read, *Luke 16.* of a wicked Rich Man receiving his good things, cloathed in Purple and fine Linnen, and faring *Sumptuously every day*. A poor Man ready

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21

to starve for Hunger, was laid at this Rich Man's Gate, his *Body was full of sores*, and yet this Mans Soul was sanctified with Grace; a good Man he was, though here he received evil things; since thus it is now, there is a day coming when 'twill be otherwise. Job having spoken of the Prosperity of the Wicked in this World, strongly argues that in the next World there will be a dreadful after-reckoning, Job. 21. 30. *The Wicked is reserved to the day of Destruction, they shall be brought forth to the day of Wrath*: This is the day I am speaking of, a day of the revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, Rom. 2. 5. *Who then will render to every man according to his works to them that by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile, v. 6, 7, 8, 9.*

3. Christ hath Promised his Church that he will come again to Judgment, and hath raised her hopes and expectations of his coming, Rev. 3. 11. *Behold I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown: Heb. 10. 36. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* He thus speaks to his Disciples, *Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me; I am indeed about to leave you, but I go to prepare a place for you; and assure your selves, I will come again, and receive you to my self, that where I am, there ye may be also, Joh. 14. 1, — 5.* Christ is the Amen, the true and faithful Witness, he will certainly be the Judge. The Church



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Church will assuredly see him at last upon the *great White Throne*; and her self safe and triumphant at his right hand. When he comes, how will he be *glorified in his Saints*, and how will he be *admired by all Believers in that Day*! 2 Thes. 1. 10.

4. There are *several things that are hastening Christs coming to Judgment*: The World grows old in Wickedness, and all the Sins of the World have *tongues to cry for the appearing of a Judge*, to pay their *deserved Wages*; the World grows riper and riper for Vengeance, dryer and dryer for that *Fire* that is to *burn it*. The Church of Christ is also *hastning Christs Appearing*, with their incessant Cryes, *Come Lord Jesus, Come quickly*, Rev. 22. 20. *The Spirit and the Bride say, Come*; not only unto Sinners to come to Christ, but unto *Christ himself* to appear, that he may put an end both to Sin and Suffering: That's the long-ing and language of the Spouse, Cant. 8. 14. *Make haste, my Beloved, and be like a Roe, or a young Hart upon the mountains of spices*: And this is not the Voice only of the Church on Earth, but *they in Heaven* wish for, and intreat the same thing; *How long, Lord, holy and true!* is heard from the *Souls under the Altar*, Rev. 6. 10.

In the last Place I come to the *Application*: I begin with *Inferences* from the *Doctrine*.

1. If there will be a Day of Judgment, hence I infer, ~~that~~ *there is a present Providence*: Will the Lord Judge all at last? surely he *observes* all now. The Lord Jesus would have all the Churches, to know as well, that he *searches the Reins and Heart*, as that he will *render to every*

man



man according to his Works, Rev. 2. 23. Whether thy Eye be upon God or no, his Eye is never off from thee; 'tis indeed in every place, beholding the evil and the good: What a foolish Creature hast thou reason to call thy self? who considerest not in thy heart that God remembers all thy Wickedness, Hos. 7. 2. and Gods remembrance at last will rub up thine; and what thou now forgettest, will sadly be recalled to thy Mind.

2. Shall all be Judged? hence I inferr the Love of God to the Righteous, and his hatred of Iniquity: Not one righteous Man, but shall be acquitted and received by the Judge; not a righteous action, or sincere intention, but shall be rewarded; It will be found at the last day, that a Widdows Mite given with a Charitable spirit, and according to the ability, was a great deal in Gods Treasury; and that a Cup of cold Water given to a Disciple, in the Name of a Disciple, was well taken, and shall not go unrewarded, Mat. 10. 42. And there has not been, there is not a Wicked Man on Earth, but his Sin that has been hunting and pursuing to overthrow him, will then find him out, Psal. 11. 5, 6. because the Lords Soul hates the workers of Iniquity; therefore upon the wicked he will rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their Cup: By fire, and brimstone, and tempest, understand a suddain, grievous, surprizing and intolerable Punishment; and by snares understand, that they in Hell shall never be able to extricate themselves out of that Misery into which their Wickedness has brought them.

3. If all shall be Judged, hence I inferr the truth

*truth of the Doctrine of the Resurrection: The whole Man has sinn'd, the whole Man shall be judg'd and punished for sin: Believers are sanctified both in Soul and Body, therefore in Body and Soul they shall be glorified. The Dead shall rise again, all that are in the Graves shall hear the Voice of Christ, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of Life, they that have done evil to the resurrection of Damnation, Joh. 5. 28, 29. The Grave is only a Prison for a time, not a Body that is there that shall lye there always; the same Body that was employed in the unfruitful works of darkness, shall be raised by the Power of the righteous Judge, to share in the demerited Punishment: And the same Body of the Saints, the Members of which were used as Instruments of Righteousness unto Holiness, by Vertue of its Union with Christ, shall rise again, and be made like unto Christs glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself, Phil. 3. 21. It is not another Body: I grant that qualities are alter'd, but the substance is the same, therefore the Apostle does not stick to say τὸ φθαρτὸν, τὸ θνητὸν ᾤσται; This corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal shall put on immortality; so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory, 1 Cor. 15. 53, 54.*

4. Will there be a Judgment, 'tis wonderful there should be so much security in them that hear of it: Really the very mentioning of Christs Tribunal, before which all must stand, should make all Criminals

minals to tremble. If a Man were seized for a Crime that's capital, deserving Death by the Law of God and Man, and being in Bolts and Fetters in *Newgate*, he should be secure and unconcerned, though the Sessious were at hand, you would conclude him to be very stupid and inconsiderate. What, Sinner, secure! and shortly to be Judged! O Drunkard! Whoremonger! Swearer! Sabbath-breaker! Covetous Worldling! what, secure! and speedily to appear at the Judgment-seat of Christ, who has said, *That they that do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God! Sin is folly, security in Sin is the folly of that folly: Take heed of Security, 'tis not I only, but Christ himself also that gives you this necessary caution, Luk; 21. 34, 35, 36. And take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares; for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth: Watch ye therefore, and Pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.*

USE II. By way of Counsel. Two words of Counsel I would give this Congregation.

The one is, more firmly to believe a Judgment, and more frequently to think of it.

The other is, Be sure in time to prepare for eternal Judgment.

1. More firmly believe, more frequently think of Judgment: You have reason to believe it, for the Judge is ordained, and though neither Men nor

nor Angels know the day, yet the *day is appointed*, Act. 17. 30, 31. *The time of this ignorance God winked at, but now commands all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the World in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* The stronger your assent is unto this, the more serious and often will be your Consideration of it.

To think of Judgment is proper for a *Saint*, that he may be encouraged to fight the good fight of Faith, and persevere in well doing to the end.

To think of Judgment is proper for a *Wicked Man*, to awaken him, and to make him with fear and trembling to work out his *Salvation*.

It's proper for an *Hypocrite* to think of Judgment, because then all Masks and Vizours will be pull'd off, all shews will be at an end, and *naked Truth* will appear at that day: The Graves will be open'd, and do ye think the *whited painted Sepulchers* will remain shut? Oh! then all the concealed Pride, and Filthiness, and Selfishness, and Sensuality, and Injustice, and earthliness of Professors, will with all their aggravations be brought to light before Men and Angels: Oh, how many demure and serious Countenances, that have been a covering to naughty Hearts, will then be filled with *Confusion*!

'Tis proper for the *Old* to think of Judgment; they have one foot in the Grave already, and quickly the whole body must drop into it, and the Spirit must return to God who gave it. You also that  
are

are Young should think of Judgment; have the youngest of you any assurance of your Lives? Infants, Children, Youths, do not many of them dye and step into Eternity? and as you see them leave the World, so certainly they appear before God, and one way or other have their Doom. Solomon tells you, that Childhood and Youth are Vanity: Would you that are Young be serious? the Meditation of Judgment would conduce much to it, *Eccles. 11. 9. Rejoyce, O young Man, in thy Youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy Youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes:* He says, *Rejoyce*, but speaks *Ironically*, and means the *quite contrary*; thou hast no reason at all to rejoyce, whilst taken with things that are seen, and whilst thou walkest in those evil ways which thy Heart naturally does like. Then the Wise man speaks seriously, *But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to Judgment.*

If you ask me, What are the Benefits that will accrue by a firm Belief, and frequent Meditation of Judgment? I thus Answer to this momentous Question.

1. This will be a *great Preservative against Temptation*: Look beyond the present advantage and delight that Sin boasts of, and see as far-as the Judgment-seat, this is the way to silence the Tempter, and to avoid his snare: Would the Lyar dare to speak falsely, if he considered, that all Lyars shall be adjudged to *the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death?* Rev. 21. 8. Would the Unclean Person dare to defile himself, and run to the Harlots house, if he did but believe and consider that *Whoremongers*  
and

*and Adulterers God will judge?* Improve Christs Crofs, and think of Christs Tribunal, and this will cool and kill Corruptions, and take away the force of your Temptations.

2. The Belief and Meditation of Judgment will cause you *to use this World as not abusing it*, to make a good improvement of it. You that have this World in great abundance, and have the *clearest and largest Estates*; do you think you are *Proprietors* of what you have? Do you think 'tis *given* or only *lent* you for a time? You are only Stewards intrusted with that which is Gods and not yours, and are accountable at the last day for all you have received. What *sad accounts* will most give up of *their Stewardship*; when they must be *no longer Stewards*! *Imprimis*, So much daily for Eating and Drinking to Self, and not to the Glory of God. *Item*, So much for brave Apparel, that Pride might be maintained and gratified. *Item*, So much for making provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof. *Item*, So much for costly and vast Past-times; a great deal of Wealth, and much more precious Time being wasted together. But unto *good uses*, to *maintain a Godly and laborious Ministry* of the Gospel, to the *poor and needy*, given *very little or nothing*. With *what an Eye* do you think that the Judge will look upon *such accounts* as these? Think of Judgment, that you may holily improve the unrighteous Mammon, and Christ may say you have been *Faithful Stewards*, even of *worldly things*.

3. The Belief and Meditation of Judgment, will make you *exceeding diligent*, that you may be found of your Judge in peace, without spot and blameless. With what Seriousness and Fervency will he come to the

Throne

Throne of Grace, that has the Judgment-seat also in his Eye? How will he hear and practise, that remembers he must be called to an account, how he has done both? He will take care to be ready whensoever his Lord calls, and that whensoever his Lord comes, he may find him doing the Work he set him about, and *so doing it* as He commands.

2. The other word of Counsel is this, *Be sure in time to prepare for Eternal Judgment*: Do this seriously, do it presently, and as your main business. That you may prepare indeed,

1. Be *Accusers and Judges of your selves*; take notice of your Sins, with Grief, with Hatred, and holy Indignation! accuse your selves of them before God, with self-loathing and self-abhorrency. Look down by Faith into the lowest Hell, and see the terrible but righteous Severity, that is shewn there against obstinate workers of Iniquity; then look up to God, and judge your selves in his sight, acknowledging that you have deserved one of the hottest places in that Lake of Fire. Acknowledge he would be *clear in the forest judgment* he should pronounce upon you, and that He would be *justified*, tho you should be *damn'd eternally*, Psal. 51. 4. This *judging of your selves*, is the way to prevent *Condemnation with the World*, 1 Cor. 11. 31, 32.

2. If you would be prepared for Judgment, *believe in Jesus, that you may be justified before God at present*. Receive Christ; who is offer'd in the Gospel; rely upon his Obedience and Sufferings for justification of life. And being justified by Faith, you shall have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 5. 1. Being justified by his Blood, you shall be Saved from wrath through him, Rom. 5. 9.



What does *ponere obicem*, put a Bar before Hell Gate, and hinder us from falling into that place of Woe? The Cross of Christ, that's the Bar; you are to place your Confidence in Christ Crucified: If justified by him now, he will *ratifie the justification* at the last day, and you shall not be condemned then, *Rom. 8. 33, 34.* Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that Condemneth? It is Christ that dyed, yea, rather that is risen again; who is at the Right Hand of God, and maketh Intercession for us.

3. Would you be prepared for Judgment; Repent and be converted; let your minds be changed, and turn to God with your whole Heart. This is the way indeed to stand before him, *Acts 3. 19.* Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. The Apostle looks as far as the last day. Blotting out of Sins, is Christ's absolving and acquitting them from all Trespases. The time of refreshing, is that great day of compleat and glorious Redemption, when all that are Christs shall lift up their Heads with Joy: Repent and be converts in Truth, if you would have that a day of refreshing, and not of confusion. Walk after the Flesh no longer, but after the Spirit; then you need not be afraid of Condemnation, your being guided by his Spirit, will shew you are in Christ, and safe in Him, *Rom. 8. 1.* There is therefore now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit; to be carnally minded is Death, but to be Spiritually minded, is life and peace.

USE III. Of Terror to the ungodly, the Hypocrites  
and



and the Unbelievers; Christ will judge them all, and they may tremble to think what kind of judgment they shall have: what sharp and piercing words are those, which declare before-hand what will be their Doom, *Mat. 23. 33. Ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* That I may, if it be possible, awaken such, I would lay before them these terrifying considerations.

1. When they appear at Christ's Bar, *all their secret wickedness will be made known.* How many will then be found what they were not in the least suspected! Thy secret wantonness, and Self-pollutions; thy secret injustice and defrauding; thy secret abominations, of all kinds, will then be as visible to every Eye, as if written in Capital Letters with the brightest Sun-beam. And what shame and confusion will cover the wicked Mans Face! they that are impudent, and cannot blush now; how will they be confounded then! The truth is, as the Prophet Daniel speaks; *They will rise to shame and everlasting contempt, Dan. 12. 2.*

2. At the day of Judgment it will be too late, and in vain for the wicked to pray and cry for Mercy; they will find the Lord eternally removed from the Throne of Grace, and to their Terror behold him on the Judgment Seat. If the Ungodly roar out, then, Lord pity! Lord pardon! Lord, send us not away into that flaming Furnace that we see before us! it will be altogether in vain: But 'tis not in vain to cry thus now. Ob, seek the Lord while he may be found, and call ye upon him whilst he is near, *Isa. 55. 6.*

3. It will add to the Terror of the Wicked, That the Sentence of Condemnation is pronounced by the Only Saviour: The merciful and faithful High Priest, that

that now is so forward to make *Reconciliation* for Sin, that is so ready to give *rest* to them that labour and are heavy laden. The Man Christ Jesus will have no pity at all, no compassion towards the Reprobate Children of Men; but deal with them as with the Apostate Angels, whose Nature he never took upon him. The only Peace-maker will himself be so incensed, and full of Wrath, as not to be intreated, not to be appeased. The Sentence of Eternal Death, and enduring everlasting Burnings, will be confounding; but 'twill add to the Confusion, that a Redeemer does pronounce it.

4. After the Judge has pass'd the Sentence, Conscience will pronounce it over again, and will be a Judge to the Wicked, always condemning them. Conscience will be filled with unspeakable remorse; it will continually be upbraiding them with their madness and folly in keeping their Sins, and losing their Souls; and will ever be telling them, that the Lords ways towards them are equal, but their own ways according to which they are judged, have been unequal, and full of Iniquity, Ezek. 18. 29, 30. The Conscience of Sinners will side with their Judge against them. It will tell the most wretched among the Dampned, that they cannot complain of God, or of the least injury he has done them; all that they suffer, they suffer justly; and what they suffer, they have brought upon themselves. The horrible and perpetual remorse of Conscience, will prove that the Worm never dies, that does torment them.

5. When Sinners come to be condemn'd at the last day, how many things will rise up in judgment against them? (pray mind this, and minding tremble,

ble, and trembling turn to God this very instant.)  
 Thousands of *Mercies* will come, and as it were  
 plead thus: *Lord! we have been all abused, we never*  
*met with any thing but abuses, and never could lead*  
*these men to Repentance!* The Rods of Affliction  
 will have a *Voice* against them too. *Lord! we*  
*have stricken these Sinners often, we have made them*  
*Bleed and Groan, and smart exceedingly for their Ini-*  
*quities; but could never make them leave off Sinning*  
*against Thee, and against their own Souls!* How ma-  
 ny Sermons will rise up in judgment against them;  
 because they either slept them away; or if they  
 were awake, they suffer'd them to slip out of their  
*Memories*, and never applyed them to their *Hearts!*  
 And as for us, the *Ministers* of the Gospel, our  
*Testimony* against them will be true and terrible.  
*Lord! we lifted up our Voices like Trumpets; we*  
*gave them the Watchmans Warning, we told them*  
*of the Sword that was coming, and that if they*  
*turned not from Sin, it would surely slay them: we*  
*wooed them to come to Jesus, that under his Wing*  
*they might be secure; but nothing would prevail;*  
*their Ears were deaf, their Hearts they hardened,*  
*they would not be converted and made clean, they*  
*would rush on in Sin still, they would needs Dye, and*  
*there was no helping it!* The *Condemnation* must  
 needs be dreadful, when so many things rise up  
 against them that are condemned!

USE IV. Of *Consolation* to the *Saints*. I must speak  
 to them in another strain. Lift up your Heads, and  
 let your Hearts be filled with Joy; all ye believing,  
 repenting, humble, holy, heavenly-minded Ones!  
 for the Day of your Redemption draws nigh.

with an earnest expectation wait for it, and Triumph at the Thoughts of your great and everlasting *Jubilee*. You will indeed behold the greatest part of mankind turned into Hell; but what Joy will it be to find your selves for ever safe and fully blessed! A dark Shadow sets off a beautiful Picture. The sight of the Rich man in Hell Flames, must needs make *Lazarus* to find a greater sweetness in *Abrahams Bosome*!

Two Grounds of Consolation I shall propound to you, and so conclude.

1. He is to be *your Judge*, that is *your Husband* and *your Head*. The very same whom you now find interceding for you in Prayer; whom you see walking in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks, and blessing his Ordinances to you. The very same whom you have found pitying, and healing your Wounds with his own Blood; succouring you in your Temptations, and telling you that you are the Beloved of his Soul! And since *he* is to Judge you, be comforted. He will behold you with an aspect, that is highly favourable! His *own Spouse*, whom he has ransomed with his *own Life*, Christ will not turn into devouring Fire! He will not take the Members of his own Body, and throw them into everlasting Burnings! Having *Redeemed* them by his *Blood*, having *renewed and Sanctified* them by his *Spirit*; having *raised* them up at the great day; certainly he will receive them to himself, and they shall be *ever with the Lord*, 1 Thes. 4. 17, 18. *wherefore be comforted with these words.*

2. You that are true Believers, whose Faith purifies your Hearts and works by Love; know  
that

that there is a Crown designed for you. The Diadems that Monarchs have upon their Heads; the Triple Crown of Him at Rome, is but a Trifle to the Crown of life. This Crown is purchased, 'tis promised, 'tis prepared; and shortly you shall put it on, and never put it off more. How Splendid, how Bright, how Sparkling, will that Crown be! 'Tis called a Crown of Life, for Death shall be no more. A Crown of Glory, for the Saints shall be more than Conquerours, and Triumphant over all Enemies, and be advanced to the highest Honour and State, whereof they are capable. Finally, 'tis called a Crown of Righteousness; 'tis a Righteous thing with God, to bestow it through Christ Jesus, and perfect Righteousness and Purity will be a great part of the happiness of Saints in Glory. This Crown the Apostle saw to his great encouragement, and he would have all other Believers comforted with the same sight, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that Day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

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## MAT. 11. 23. Form. Part.

*And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell!*

**O**UR Lord Jesus is called the *Lamb of God* who takes away the Sins of the World: But in this Lamb there is *Wrath*, and that Wrath is very terrible. Oh the weight of the Mediatours Vengeance! This Wrath is threatned against the impenitent and unbelievers, who refuse to be *Saved from their Sins*, resolving to live, tho they *Dye* in them. The *Light* of the Gospel being neglected, highly aggravates the *Works of Darknes*; makes them more inexcusable, and a greater provocation. None shall fare worse at the *Day of Judgment*, than those that have had the longest and the clearest day of *Grace*; but would not know in that their day, the things which belonged to their *Peace*. Thou *Capernaum* which art exalted unto *Heaven*, shalt be brought down to *Hell*.

These words which I have read, do speak Christ's sorrow and his displeasure, wherein you may take notice,

1. Of the *Persons* with whom he is displeased, *Thou Capernaum*; the City is put for the *Inhabitants* of it.

2. Here is the *Reason* of Christ's displeasure; they did not understand the great priviledge of being *Exalted unto Heaven*; they did not improve the advantage they had of getting thither.

3. Here

3. Here is a *Punishment* threatned; a fore evil; and that is no less than Hell it self.

4. Here is the *manner* specified of their *going to Hell*; thou shalt be *brought down to Hell*, with a strong Hand, with great Wrath, and in one of the hottest and lowest Places there thou shalt lye for ever.

There are two Doctrines which I raise from the Words.

First, *Those that hear the Gospel, are exalted unto Heaven*: Happy you, if you understand your Priviledge which at this day you enjoy.

Secondly, *They who will not turn to God at the Gospel-call, shall certainly be turned into Hell*: Thou Capernaum, who art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell; and if Christ says it shall be so, most certainly it will be so. The first of these I shall but just touch upon, for it is the second that I principally purpose to Prosecute.

Doct. 1. The first Doctrine is this; *They that hear the Gospel, are exalted unto Heaven*. The Gospel is an heavenly Calling, *Heb. 3. 1.* it comes from Heaven, and says to those that hear it, *Come up hither*.

1. Life and Immortality is *brought to light by the Gospel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. Here you have a Map of those happy Regions of Light, and Love, and Joy; where there is nothing present that is burthensome, where there is nothing wanting that is desirable.

2. The Gospel plainly *chalks out the way that leads to Life*: Christ is *the way, the truth, and the life*, Joh. 14. 6. the true way to life indeed: We have

have liberty to enter into the holiest of all, by the blood of Jesus: had it not been for his undertaking, and performance of what he undertook, there had been a flaming Sword at Heavens gate, and no fallen Man could ever have entred there. And as Christ, in whom we are to believe, is the way, so is also Holiness: Christ by his Blood has purchased the heavenly Inheritance, and has bought the Saints themselves that are to be the Inheritors; and 'tis by his sanctifying Spirit, by true Holiness, that they are made meet for that Inheritance. The pure in Heart, and such will be likewise pure in Life, are the blessed Ones that shall see God, Mat. 5. 8. and who besides are desirous or fit to see the Lord?

3. Heaven in the Gospel is offer'd; 'tis seriously, freely offer'd unto All; 'tis offer'd to the meanest Persons, 'tis offer'd to the greatest Sinners, and that without Money, without Price: 'Tis indeed too good, too great a thing for Man to purchase by any thing that he can give or do. Those have very low thoughts of Heaven, and very high thoughts of their own Works, that think they can do enough to merit Heaven. Eternal Life is the free Gift of God, not deserved by Man; and 'tis given through Christ, Rom. 6. 23. Had not Christ procured it, fallen Men would all have been as certainly excluded as the fallen Angels.

Briefly to Apply this.

1. Be thankful for the Gospel, which makes the richest discovery that ever was made in this World; the East, the West-Indies cannot shew any thing comparable to a blessed Immortality; the Jew-

els



els from the one, the Gold from the other, are contemptible, when Heaven is named. The Gospel tells you where is the true, the *tried Gold*, and of the *Pearl which is of greatest price*; and concerning a *Treasure in Heaven*, which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor can thieves break through and steal, Mat. 6. 20.

2. Let the Kingdom of Heaven *suffer Violence*, and do you use an holy force to take it; here you will meet with great opposition; Heaven is that which occasions the envy of Hell, because of its real and eternal Excellency, and does very well deserve your labour. Let the *Treasure in Heaven* cause your *Hearts* to be there, strive to enter in at the strait gate, hate every false way, because it leads from Heaven, and towards Destruction; let the Hopes of a Crown of glory make you willing to bear the Cross; look upon Sloth as most absurd, when no less than Heaven will be given to them who shew their *diligence in full assurance of hope unto the end*: Press still forward towards the mark; you cannot run too fast for such a Prize.

But I shall stay on this no longer: 'Tis the second Doctrine that more largely I shall insist on.

Doct. 2. And that's this, *Those that will not turn to God at the Call of the Gospel, shall certainly be turned into Hell*; 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. *They that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

In the handling of this Doctrine, I shall,

1. Dis-

## The Damnation of Hell.

1. Discourse concerning Hell, what it is, that you may the *better understand it*; and understanding be afraid of it.

2. I shall *prove the Certainty* of the Doctrine, that Sinners who will not turn to God, shall most surely be turned into Hell.

3. I shall Vindicate the Righteousness of God, in thus dealing with, and eternally Punishing them that will not turn to him.

4. I shall conclude with the *Uses and Application*.

In the first Place I am to Discourse concerning Hell, and to shew you *what it is*. In Hell

There is a *Deprivation of good*.

There is an *Infliction of evil, pain and torment*.

There is an *Eternity* of both.

1. In Hell there is a *Deprivation of good*: All the temporal losses that have been sustained by all the Children of Men in this World, are not comparable to the *Pœna Damni*, Punishment of loss, which one Sinner in Hell shall undergoe: Several things those in Hell are deprived of.

1. They are deprived of *all that Love, and Grace, and Mercy that is in God*: The Psalmist that knew by experience the excellency of God's Loving-kindness, affirms 'tis *better than Life*, Psal. 63. 3. His Mercys are *tender*, and a *multitude*, and *sure* to the Vessels of Mercy. How were those fill'd with admiration, and with a sense of their obligation, *Who in times past were not a People*, but were made the *People of God*; who had not obtained *Mercy*, but after did obtain *Mercy*, 1 Pet. 2. 10. But alas, tho' God be *Love* it self, 1 Joh. 4. 8. he hath no Love for them that are in Hell, they lye under

der his Wrath and Hatred, and both are unalterably fixt upon them: Though the Lord does delight in shewing Mercy, yet his Bowels do not at all stir or move towards the Damned; though they lye in extreamest Woe, and are continually *weeping and wailing*, yet their Tears *draw not* forth his *Compassions*: He has *cast them off for ever*, and will be *favourable no more*; he has *forgotten to be gracious*, and in implacable, but righteous Anger, has *shut up his tender Mercies*.

2. They that are in Hell, are deprived of the *beatifical Vision of God*: The door of Heaven they found shut against them, when they said, *Lord, Lord, open to us!* and 'twill never be opened: They shall never be suffered to *see him face to face*, but be always excluded from his Presence. What Happiness is there in *seeing God*! how transforming and satisfying is this sight! *Psal. 17. ult. As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness*: But the Damned are not, never shall be admitted to such a View; they are banished that glorious Presence, where there is *fulness of joy*, and where there are *pleasures for evermore*: God has fixt a great gulph between himself and them, and through that 'tis impossible for them to *pass*, Luk. 16. 26.

3. They in Hell are deprived of *all hopes by a Mediator*: Our Lord tells us, That he came not into the World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved; and has given a large Commission to Preach the Gospel, to offer that Grace and Salvation whereof he is the Author, to every Creature, Mark 16. 15. The Lord Jesus now encourages all to come to him, that they

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they may have rest to their Souls, and life through his Name ; and *them that come to him, he will in no wise cast out*, Joh. 6. 37. and when they refuse to come, he expresses great sorrow ; he *wept over Jerusalem*, because she *knew not the time of her gracious Visitation*. But when Sinners have sinn'd away the day of Grace, and ended all their days on Earth, and by their final Impenitency brought themselves to Hell ; then the same Chains are clapt on them, in which the Reprobate Angels ly fetter'd, and Christ will no more save *them* than *these*. Oh dreadful ! to lose all hope in Jesus, never to be called to come to him more : Astonishingly fearful ! to be in a place where the glad tidings of the Gospel are never heard, where the Spirit never strives, and where the Redeemer never stretches forth an hand to save !

4. They in Hell are deprived of the glory of the new Jerusalem : 'Tis a mighty loss, to lose such a weighty thing as a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17. Suppose a Rich Man, worth Millions, should break, and not be worth a Farthing ; suppose all the Kings and Emperors breathing, should lose their Crowns in one day, this would be but a petty Loss, compared with the loss of a Crown of Life : In Heaven there is such a Crown, and the Damned might have had it, if they had but valued it ; but alas ! that Crown they must never wear : In Heaven there is a Kingdom, where they in Hell must never reign : When they see what they have lost, and how foolishly, wilfully, and for the sake of what poor thing they lost it, how will they be fill'd with Heart-tearing vexation, and be quite overwhelmed with sorrow.



sorrow, *Luk. 13. 28. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the Kingdom of Heaven, and you your selves thrust out.*

2. As in Hell there is a Deprivation of good, so there is an *Infliction of evil, pain and torment.*

1. There is in Hell *great torment in the Conscience*: A wounded Conscience in *this World* has been found intolerable. *Spiras*, he signifies that Racks, Gibbets, Flames of Martyrdom, were nothing to what he felt, and in a Pang of Despair attempts Self-murthering; but being hindred, he breaks out into Blasphemy, *I wish I were above God, for I know he will not have Mercy on me*: here was Hells language in his Mouth, and much of Hell-torment in his Heart. *Judas* his Conscience was wounded, could he bear it? No, he becomes his own Executioner, with his own hand ends his Life, and sends his Soul to *his appointed place*: And yet the torment of Conscience in this World, is but the *Preludium*, the beginning of sorrows. Every Conscience in Hell will be *thoroughly awake*, and keep it self *for ever waking*; it will be *exactly sensible*; not a Sin that has been Committed all the life-time, but will have made a Wound in the Conscience; and not a Wound but will be intolerably smarting, without hope of any ease. Conscience will be in a perpetual Agony, in this Agony 'twill rage, and raging it will reproach the Damned: It will tell them of their presumptuous sinning, of their rejecting Christ, their neglecting great Salvation, and how all *its checking* of them was *in vain*: And now 'tis incurably wounded, it can never be quiet, but they shall always find it

a tormented, a tormenting Fury within them.

2. There is in Hell, not only torment in the Conscience, but also torment in the *Mind and Heart*: What *rueful* thoughts will possess their *Minds*! whatever they think of will be torturing; a pleasing, a delightful thought can never enter into them more: If they *think of Sin*, it will be bitter to consider how they have been deceived and ruin'd by it: If they think of their *present Misery*, and the remedilessness of it, and that themselves had the greatest hand in bringing themselves into it, these thoughts like *daggers*, must needs pierce their Souls: If they *think of God*, Oh how will they be troubled! how will his *Justice*, *Jealousie*, *Fury*, *Holiness*, *Truth*, *irresistible Power*, and *Unchangeableness* terrifie them! Thoughts on Earth were their *Sins*, and Thoughts in Hell will be their *Racks and Sorrows*; their Hearts will always be *brim full of Grief*. *Shame and Confusion of face* will add to their Misery, when all their wickedness shall be known to all, which will make the justness of their Punishment evident. And how will they be tormented with *Anger at the very heart*, and *Indignation against themselves*! because, though the Devil was their great Enemy, yet they themselves were far greater Enemies to themselves than he.

3. There will in Hell be torment in *Sinners Memories*: I wish that none of you that hear me this day, may in that place of Woe, remember the *Warning now given you*, to your *Confusion*, because you would not take it; heark what was said, *Lu* 16. 25. *Son, remember thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now*

is comforted, and thou art tormented : Really the remembrance of what he *had*, what he *was*, and what he *did* on Earth, was in Hell very tormenting to this wretched Rich Man. The Damned *there*, will remember their delicious Fare, and how sensual and brutish they were in pleasing of their Appetites ; they will remember the time they spent in Adorning of themselves, taking much Pains to dress and trick the Carcass, but no Pains at all to purge the Heart ; they will remember their Feasts, their Mirth, their carnal Jollity, which quite stupified their Hearts, and banished all thoughts and care about another World and Eternity ; they will remember all the *Mercies* they enjoyed, which they did nothing but abuse to their own harm, as well as to the dishonour of that God who gave them.

Above all, they will remember what Pains were taken to have prevented their Destruction : The Lord was unwilling they should Perish, but Death was that which themselves prefer'd before Life. Oh how long did Christ come, Sabbath after Sabbath, and knock at the door, but they would not open ! How often did the Spirit strive with them, to stop them in Hell's road, and to turn them into the way of Peace, but they were stiff-necked, and always resisted the Holy Ghost. They will remember their Preachers Pains and Prayers, and labour and travel of Soul ; how they lifted up their Voices, to awaken them out of their Sin and Security ; how they intreated them to be reconciled to God, and to turn into the safe and blessed Paths of Righteousness ; but they were Deaf and obstinate, nothing would prevail with them, and the remembrance of all this will be bitter, bitter, bitter to them.

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*the Members of it*, and such as no body ever felt, or was capable of bearing here on Earth: The Stone, the Cholick and the Strangury, the greatest Torture that ever the hand of Man inflicted, are no more comparable to the Pains of Hell, than the smallest Prick of a Pin is to a Dagger that strikes quite through, and gives the Heart a deadly Wound. The Senses of the Damned shall have that which will be exceedingly afflicting: What woful Spectacles will their *Eyes* behold! What dismal Noyses will fill their *Ears*! how fierce and unquenchable are the Flames that they shall feel! *all their parts* shall be in pain, not so much as *one* free: The whole Body was defiled, and at Sins service, all the Members were yielded as *instruments of Unrighteousness*; 'tis but righteous that all should be Punished. Why are the *Bodies* of the Wicked raised at the last day? surely that they may bear their part in the Condemnation, which the whole Man by Sin has deserved. This Resurrection is certain, but 'tis a dreadful Resurrection, which is a *Resurrection to Damnation*, Joh. 5. 29.

In these Torments you may well suppose that *Death* will be wisht for, and that the Damned would *rejoyce if they could find a Grave*; but alas, after the Resurrection, the *first Death* is no more: The Damned in a sad sense do put on Incorruption and Immortality, they can never dye and cease to feel their Pains; they must always live a Life ten thousand times worse than Death, and there is no remedy. O you Wicked Men! where's your *true Love* to your *Bodies*, that you seem to be so tender of? I beseech you mind your *Souls*, and love your *Bodies* better, than by Sin to expose them to the Vengeance of eternal Fire. You see how in Hell there is a *Deprivation of good*, an *Infliction of evil*, pain and torment: I add,

3. In Hell there is an *Eternity* of both; the deprivation will be without *Hope of Restitution*; and the Torment will be without any *end*, without the *least Mitigation*. *Eternity* is an amazing word; the thing it self much more amazing! Who can see to the end of *Eternity*! who can see half way into *Eternity*! *Time* is continually *passing*; but *Eternity* never in the least *spends*: 'tis not capable of any *diminution*; after *myriads of Ages*, 'tis still as *bulky* and *whole* as ever. If Hell were Ten thousand times hotter than it is, yet were it but a *Temporal Punishment*, and at last to end, 'twould be *Nothing* in comparison. But since those that are thrown into it, must lye in it for ever, Hells *Eternity* is the very Hell of Hell. In *Eternity*, whether of *Joy* or *Woe*, there is *tota simul & perfecta possessio*, the whole of it perfectly possess'd at once. Hell is not *parcel'd out* unto the Damned, but they continually feel the whole of it. This is terrible; there is not the least part of the punishment, that ever they are exempted from undergoing: but 'tis much more terrible, that their Suffering must be *always*, and never have a Conclusion.

Divines have stretch'd their Wits to represent *Eternity*, that apprehensions of it might be more suitable and affecting, but were never able to reach it. We can no more comprehend *Eternity*, than a Nut-shell can contain the whole Ocean. Suppose that all this World were fill'd with *Sand*, from the Earths Centre round, and up to the *highest Heaven*; and once in a *Thousand Years*, one single *Sand* should be taken away: How sad would it be to lye in Torment, till the whole *vast heap* were gone! But after so many Millions and Millions of Years, for the Damned to be every whit as far from the End of



*their Misery*, as they were the *very first moment* they began to feel it; here *all words fall short*, and I must conclude in *Astonishment* ! Do not think that these are *frightful things invented by Us to scare you into better manners*. When we warn and tell you of the Eternity of Hells punishment, we speak the certain Truth of the Eternal God.

In the second place, I am to prove the Doctrine; That *they who will not turn to God, shall most certainly be turned into Hell*. The Arguments to prove this, are these.

1. The first shall be drawn from the *Wrath of God*. This is revealed from Heaven against all *ungodliness and unrighteousness of Men*, Rom. 1. 18. They that are called to turn, and yet refuse, that Wrath abides upon them still; unbelief and impenitency binds, as it were all their Sins fast upon them, and they must needs remain under Wrath also, *Joh. 3. ult.* *He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him*. Nay, Wrath instead of being appeased, is increased, by contemning the Gospel-offer of Gods favour and mercy in Christ. And where will unpacified Wrath at length issue ? See *Deut. 32. 22.* *A Fire is kindled in mine Anger, and it shall burn to the lowest Hell*.

2. A second Argument shall be drawn from the *Truth of God*. He has threatned Hell for the punishment of unconverted Sinners, *Psal. 9. 17.* *The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God*: Let there be never so many of them, Hell has room enough to hold them, and their multitude will not be any Security. The Truth of God is engaged to make good *all his promises to the Faithful*, and also *all his threatnings to the Wicked*.



A man must believe the Promises in order to the accomplishment of them : But tho the Threatnings are dis-believed, they will be fulfilled ; and the greater the unbelief, the *more certainly* and *soresly* will they overtake, and lay hold on the *Unbeliever*.

The Lord is to be credited when he speaks, because he is a God that *cannot Lye* ; but when he adds his *Oath* to his word, what he sayes is the *more firmly* to be assented to. His *Covenant of Grace* is confirm'd by an Oath, and when he could Swear by no greater, he Swore by himself. And his Oath also confirms his Threatnings of Wrath, Heb. 3. 18, 19. *And to whom Swear he that they should not enter into his Rest, but to them that believed not ? So we see that they could not enter in because of Unbelief.*

3. Another Argument to prove, that unconverted Sinners shall be turned into Hell, shall be drawn from their present Impunity. Escaping now scot-free, we may conclude the greater certainty of a future reckoning. They that will not turn to God, we see that many of them are in Health, at ease, enjoy peace and plenty, and Sentence against their evil works being not *now* executed, and they hereupon being fully set to do Evil ; 'tis reasonable to believe there will be, and 'tis very Righteous there should be a terrible Sentence of Condemnation, and that Sentence put in Execution upon them in the other World.

4. They that will not turn to God at the Gospel call, shall be turned into Hell, for they *sight the only Saviour*. Christ calls himself a *Door* ; so he *has been*, from the beginning of the World ; so he *will be* to the End of it. There is no *Door* through which Hell can be escaped, but this. Unconverted Sinners will not come to Him that they may have Life, Joh. 5. 40.

therefore they are unavoidably Siezed by eternal Death. *Corruptible things, as Silver and Gold,* they know how to value, but the *precious Blood of Christ* is not prized, and not being Sprinkled with the Blood of Christ *our Passover, who was Sacrificed for us*; the Destroyer has power over them, and they fall into eternal Predition.

In the third place, I am to vindicate the Righteousness of God in thus dealing with, and eternally punishing them that will not turn to Him: And here,

1. Let the *Majesty and greatness of God* be consider'd, *against whom all Sin is committed.* How much greater a Crime is it to strike a Prince upon the Throne, than to strike a Peasant! How much is Sin *greatned*, being committed against the *Highest Majesty of all*, who is infinitely Superiour to all other Powers, *Psal. 104. 1. O Lord, my God, thou art very great, thou art Cloathed with Honour and with Majesty! Psal. 145. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.* Sin is a Transgression of a Law, enacted by the King of Heaven; and is indeed a disowning of his Sovereign Authority, as if he had no right to rule the Sinner. Think of the *infinite distance* between the God who is offended, and Man that is the Offender, and how much Sin offends; for it disowns his Government, and strikes at his very Being; for the Sinner wishes there were no God to be subject to. I say, think of all this, and you will perceive that Sin deserves everlasting Punishment. The carnal Mind thinks Hell too much for a Sinner to feel, because it measures God by it self, and thinks too little of the Glorious *Jehovah*.

2. Sinners

2. Sinners can never by all that they suffer themselves, satisfy for their Iniquities; therefore their punishment in Hell is justly endless: No meer Creature can make satisfaction for Sin. If Christ the Mediatour, had not been over all God blessed for ever, by his Death and all his Sufferings, he would never have made Peace. His God-head put a real and infinite value upon the price he paid, and made it sufficient for our Redemption. The Damned in Hell cannot satisfy the Justice of God for their Transgressions; therefore they justly are kept eternal Prisoners there. It is above five Thousand Years ago, that the Evil Angels were cast down to Hell; by the punishment they have undergone, have they made any Satisfaction for their offences? No, no, still they have continued in their Enmity, and deserved more punishment. And from Satans utter alienation from God and all goodness, we may infer, that Hell is not a place to mend any; but Sin is hight'ned; those that were bad on Earth, become worse in Hell, and are unalterably confirm'd in Evil.

3. The punishment of Sin in Hell is justly Eternal, because Sin is insatiable. Suppose a Sinner could live in this World to Eternity, there is corruption enough in his Nature, to make him an Offender of God unto Eternity. If he were an everlasting Liver upon Earth, he would be an everlasting Transgressor. If the Carnal Heart would but speak out, that would be its Language: *I would desire no other, no greater happiness, than that I might live here for ever, that I might Sin here for ever.* This insatiable Nature of Sin, this inclination and desire of the Sinner, is known to the Heart-searcher; therefore the punishment he inflicts is very Righteous, tho' tis everlasting.

4. For the Vindication of the Righteousness of God, take notice *what has been offered unto Sinners, and rejected.* Christ is offered; his justifying Righteousness, his *unsearchable Riches*; all his *Fulness*; all the Benefits which he has purchased at so dear a Price, and yet the offer is made light of. How much is contemn'd, when Christ is Contemn'd! and how much of Sin is there in the Contempt! The blessed God in the Glorious Gospel, does call to Sinners to turn to him; and what does he offer? His own all-sufficient-self. *I my self am yours, if you will turn to me, and become sincerely mine. I will be a God to you, all my attributes shall be for you: I will be your Shield, and your exceeding great Reward, and your Portion for ever!* Now for a Sinner to turn a Deaf Ear to all this, is such a Sin, as does deserve the *Eternal loss* of what is offer'd; and the feeling of everlasting Wrath is just, since such infinite and everlasting Goodness has been despised. I might also add, that the Sinner is told of this *Eternal Punishment before-hand*; therefore if his Lusts are so dear, that he will venture to be Damned, rather than part with them, when those Lusts that War against his Soul have quite undone him, and brought him down to Hell indeed, he cannot charge God with Injustice; but he must blame himself, because when warned of Hell and Wrath, he would not fear and Flee from it.

I come now to the *Application*. I begin with some Inferences, that may be drawn from the Doctrine.

1. If Sinners that will not turn, shall be brought down to Hell; certainly *Sin is another kind of thing than is commonly imagined.* Oh Sin! how much art thou mistaken!

mistaken ! Thou art very little understood on Earth ! In Heaven thou art better understood by Saints, and full glad they are they are quite rid of thee ! In Hell thou art better understood by Sinners, and they must Groan for ever under the weight of thee ! O all of you, Study Hell more, if you would know Sin more fully. Gods severity towards Man for Sin, argues it a very vast Evil. I am perswaded, that all the Men upon Earth, that *all the Saints and Angels in Heaven*, since they cannot comprehend the *greatness and goodness of God*, neither can they comprehend *all the Evil* that is in Sin : And if God alone does *fully understand how Evil Sin is*, he alone is the competent Judge what *Punishment is due to it*. O exceeding sinful Sin ! Rom. 7. 13. thou canst not be called by so bad a Name, as thy own is !

2. Learn from hence the *Misery of unconverted Sinners*. Are there none unconverted here ? I wish there were not. Are there not many unconverted in this place ? I fear there are. Seriously consider in what State you are. You walk upon the *Brink of Hell*; you Eat and Drink upon the *Brink of Hell*; in your Shops, at the Exchange, you are still upon the *Brink of Hell*; when you lye down at Night, you Sleep upon the *Brink of Hell*. Oh what *Hearts* are yours, that you can Sleep *securely* ! Is such a perilous State to be rested in ? In such danger, and *depths of Misery*, how should you cry to the Lord for mercy, *Psal. 130. 1. Davids words are proper for a Sinner to make use of, Psal. 51. 1. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy loving kindness, and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my Transgressions.*

3. Hence I infer, That they who refuse to turn to God, are *certainly besides themselves*, else the broken Cisterns would not draw them away from the Fountain

tain of living Waters; and a little gain and pleasure, would not make them venture to lye in Flames unquenchable. God sayes, Turn ye, turn ye! Will you turn, or will ye not? If you will, you shall live; if you won't, where are your Wits? You are out of them in the worst Sense of all. The Lord now sayes, *Turn*, if ye will not hear and obey, at last he will say *Depart*, and that word you *must* obey, and be forced away from him into everlasting Burnings.

4. Shall Sinners be turned into Hell; then their *Prosperity is not to be envied or admired*. It has been a Custom in some places, to grant to condemn'd Malefactors, a Liberty to enjoy their Pleasures and Delights a few days before their Execution; but alas, what did these signifie to them that were to dye a few days after? A *fit Representation* of the condition of the Wicked! They are perhaps gaudily Cloathed, and daintily Fed, and have *more than Heart could wish*: But this prosperity is very short; they stand in *slippery Places*, and quickly fall; *they are brought to Destruction as in a moment, and utterly consumed with Terroures*, Psal. 73. 18, 19. The ungodly do very much need our pity; but nothing that they have is worth our Envy.

5. Hence I interr the *happinefs of sincere Converts*. Many temporal Evils may be their exercise at present; but Hells eternal Torments they shall never feel, Rom. 8. 1. *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*. Whatever the Times are; in Eternity, and to Eternity, it will be well with them. If Hell were Ransack't all over, you might find Professours, Preachers, Princes, Nobles there; you might find worldly Wise, and worldly wealthy a greatmany, but  
not

not *one true Convert among the whole Number.* Converts are reconciled to God by the Blood of Christ, and are safe and happy. Hell is a dreadful place, and has a very wide Door; but who has the Key of it? The Key is not in Satans, but in Christ's keeping, *Rev. 1. 18. I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.* He will open the Door of Death, that Converts Bodies may come out of the Grave; he will keep the door of Hell fast shut, that Converts shall never be thrown in thither.

USE II. Of Exhortation. That you would all consider more seriously, and believe more heartily this Doctrine of Hell. Often think of the loss sustained, and of the Torment felt there. It was the Advice of Chrysostom, *Μὴ φεύγωμεν τὴν τῆς καλαστικῆς μνήμης, ἵνα μὴ κολαζώμεν:* Let us not fly the remembrance of Hell Torment, that we may never be Tormented there. The believing consideration of Hells punishment, will have many good Effects.

1. Hereby the *deceitfulness of Sin* will be discovered. The deceitfulness of Sin *hardens you,* *Heb. 3. 13. Exhort one another daily, while 'tis called to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of Sin.* Sin pretends to consult your ease, your safety, your satisfaction, your gain, your pleasure: Think seriously of Hell, and all these will be found vain pretences. Oh how very false a thing is Sin! First you must prove Hell *desirable*, before you can prove that Sin is worthy to be loved and served.

2. The Remembrance of Hell, will be a great Preservative against the Tempter. Evil Angels are great Enemies to the good Word of God; especially they are displeased at Sermons concerning Christ and Hell; they



they are unwilling that Men should know the Destruction Sin has brought them in danger of; unwilling they should hear of a Saviour and Deliverer. Think of Hell whenever you find the Devil tempting. He endeavours to hide Hell from your Eyes, that he may lead you secure thither. Satan tells the Intemperate Man, that makes himself a Beast by excessive Drinking; that this is the way to Exhilarate and cheer his Spirits, a Remedy against care and sorrow, and a means to make him merry. But he would not have the Drunkard think of Hell, nor of the dreadful Cup of Gods indignation without mixture, that will be put into his hand at the last day. Satan tells the defrauding, over-reaching Knave, that he will be a great Gainer by his Subtlety; but he hides Hell from him, where none of his Gain remains, and where eternal happiness, and an immortal Soul are lost for ever. Satan tells the filthy Wretch, of the pleasures to be found in the embraces of the well-favoured Harlot; but this he conceals; that going to her House, his Feet go down to Death, and his Steps will soon take hold on Hell. It would be Wisdom in you, and in all, to see how Sin and Hell are joyned together. It would make the Tempter lose his labour; if you would ever remember, that in Tempting you to Sin, he does in effect only persuade to be willing for even to be destroyed.

3. The serious consideration of Hell, will quicken you to cry for Mercy. Upon the Sight of Hells misery, how desirable will Mercy be in your Eyes! You will pray for this with all Prayer. God will find you in the Congregation, in the Family, and in the Closet, making your fervent Supplications; and Mercy will be your great Suit. God delights in showing Mercy, Mic. 7. 18. The thoughts of Hell will make



make you see how much you need it, and such fail not to obtain it.

4. The Remembrance of Hell will contribute much to your steadfastness in Religion; 'twill fortifie and arm you against the fear of Man: how little is it that the greatest Man, that the most of Men can do to you? to fall into the hands of mortal Men, that can but kill the body, is no great matter; but to fall into the hands of the living God, is fearful, Heb. 10. 31. Hark what our Lord says, Luk. 12. 48. 5. I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear; fear him who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him: Yes, he is indeed worthy to be feared. It was a saying of one, *Omnia supplicia, graviora suppliciorum vincuntur formidine*; all Punishments are overcome by the fear of greater Punishments. When thou art called forth to bear Testimony to Christ and to his Truth, before a sinful and an adulterous generation; though thou seest Wracks and Wheels, though thou seest Flames and Furnaces of scalding Lead, be not affrighted at the matter; the Grace and Comfort of the Spirit of Christ shall be sufficient to carry thee through these Pains; and these are nothing, compared with the Vengeance of eternal fire, which will be inflicted upon those that draw back unto perdition.

USE III. Of Direction: How this whole Congregation may escape the Damnation of Hell. I hope every Eye is broad awake; and should not every Ear be open, and every Heart exceedingly attentive, when Directions concerning this are given? The Directions are these:

1. If you would escape Hell, think of Hell, the Effect

*effect of Sin, so long, 'till you utterly fall out with Sin the Cause: Sin is the only way that leads to Hell, shun that way and you are safe: Depart from evil, and though possibly you may become a Prey in this World, ye Satan shall not make a Prey of you. If Sin had never entered into the World, none in the World would have been turned into Hell; if neither Men nor Angels had sinn'd against God, there would have been no such thing as Hell in being. Oh! View the Flames that are so furious, and that will last for ever, and then consider Sin was that which kindled them, and the demerit of Sin is so infinitely great, that it hinders them from being ever quenched: Does thy Pride expose thee to Damnation? never be Proud more: Will thy Earthly-mindedness bring thee to Hell? Oh cease thy loving the World, and the things that are in the World! 1 Joh. 2. 15. Will any Sin that rules in thee, and that thou art willingly subject to, reign unto Death, and ruine thee for ever? Oh be unwilling that any Sin should reign any longer; and if Sin be out of thy Will, 'tis out of the Throne: Cry with David, Psal. 119. 133. Order my steps in thy Word, and let no Iniquity have the dominion over me. Weary you must be of Sins dominion, as well as fear Hells Damnation: You must not think to go to Heaven, and carry your beloved Lusts along with you thither; if you are resolved to hold fast these, you and they will go to Hell together.*

2. If you would escape Hell, take notice how the door of Hope is open to the very worst of you: Those that are gone far in Hells road, and are within a step of the burning Lake, tis possible for them to be caught as firebrands out of the burning. The door is open to day, I advise you to enter presently; I cannot assure you 'twill stand open 'till to morrow; While

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it is called to day, *harden not your hearts, Heb. 3. 8.* Though you are fallen by your Iniquities, yet if you will *Now* return to the Lord, there is hope for the very worst of you; past Sins shall all be buried, if there be a present Conversion. *Redemption is plenteous*, and that should abundantly encourage all to Hope and Turn, *Psal. 130. 7, 8. Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption, and he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.*

3. If you would escape Hell, you must be sure to look unto Jesus: Lord Jesus! Turn every Eye to thee, and cause every Heart to open and receive thee! Those that were stung with the fiery Serpents, liv'd notwithstanding, if they look unto the brazen Serpent: Those that are in danger of Hell, and have very well deserved it, shall be delivered from it, if by Faith they look to Christ, *Isa. 45. 22. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the Earth:* Look unto him for Pardon, look unto him for Converting, Cleansing and Renewing Grace; look unto him to be the Author of true Faith in you, and having been the Author, to be the Finisher of your Faith also, *Heb. 12. 2.* Christ was forsaken, that you might graciously be received by the Lord: He was Condemn'd to dye, and suffer'd Death upon the Cross, that you might be deliver'd from eternal Death and Condemnation; that this was his design is plain, *Joh. 3. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should scape Hell, and be brought safe to Heaven; should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

HEB.

HEB. 12. Part of v. 1.

— *And the Sin that does so easily beset us.*

**I**N the foregoing Chapter, the Apostle discourses concerning *Faith*, which is the *substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*: He declares at large the wonderful and glorious effects that this Faith produced in the Saints under the Old Testament: By Faith these Believers denyed themselves; by Faith they Conquered the whole World, not fearing its fiercest Persecutions; despising all its Wealth, all its Pleasures, all its Glory, and confessed they were *strangers and sojourners on the Earth*: By Faith they saw *Him that is invisible*, and looked for a *City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*.

Now in this Verse where my Text lies, the Apostle applies unto those believing *Hebrews* to whom he writes, what he had spoken concerning their *faithful Fore-fathers*: These are called a *Cloud of Witnesses*: Witnesses they were, concerning what? truly concerning the *Vanity* of all things that are seen, that are but *temporal*: Witnesses concerning the *excellency* of those things that are not seen, which are *eternal*. They are styled a *Cloud*, because of the *greatness of their Number*; and perhaps there may be some allusion to the *Cloud* in the *Wilderness*, that guided *Israel* into *Canaan*: For though our *Lord Jesus* was typified by that *Cloud*, and he is the *morning Pattern* and *Example* whom we are bound to follow; yet in Scripture we are advised also to follow the *foot-steps of the Flock*; and in this very Epistle, to be *followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises*.

The

The Course of a Christian in this World is compared to a *Race*; this Race must be *run*, that the Prize at the end of it may be obtained; and that we may run it the better, we are *removere prohibens*, to remove Impediments, to lay aside every *Weight*, and the *Sin that does so easily beset us*.

In the Words I have read, there are three things observable.

1. Here is an *Intimation* of a *Danger*, and that is from *Sin*: Sin and Danger are inseparable; how can it chuse but be prejudicial to him that's guilty of it! you may as well imagine *Hell* to be without *Pain*, as *Sin* to be without *Peril*.

2. The greatest danger is from the Sin that does most easily beset us; 'tis called by the Holy Ghost, *ἐν μέλει ἡμῶν ἀμαρτία*, the Sin that hangs fastest about us: Some by this understand *Original Sin*, the depravation and Corruption of Nature; some understand the carnal and ensnaring *Fear of Man*: The Apostle arms the *Hebrew Saints* against this, and would have them courageous, and if called to it, *resist even to blood, striving against sin*. But by the Sin that does most easily beset us, we may understand any sin that does so: Yet when we take notice of the *Master-sin*, which is most apt to prevail, we should by all means trace it to its *Original*, and take notice of the corrupt *Fountain* from which this strong and filthy *Stream* proceeds.

3. Here is the way how to be secured from *Danger*, by laying aside every *weight*, and especially the greatest and the heaviest *Clogg* of all, the Sin that does most easily beset us. Cast away every *transgression*, so *iniquity shall not be your ruine*; but especially that which naturally you love best and more than all, because this, is most of all pernicious and destructive.

*Doct.* The Doctrine which I raise from the words is this. *Though all sin is to be cast away, the Master-sin especially is to be abandoned.*

In the handling of this Doctrine I shall,

1. Prove that *all Sin* is to be cast away.
2. I shall shew you how the *Master sin* may be known.
3. Produce the Reasons, why *this* in a *special* manner is to be forsaken.

And then in the last place make *Application*.

In the first place I am to prove that *every sin* should be cast away ; and the Argument to convince you of this, is in the Verse where my Text lies. Every Sin is a *weight*, and a most unreasonable thing it is, that Men should be fond of that which is burthensome and grievous. The weightiness of Sin, I shall demonstrate in these particulars.

1. Sin is a weight to a *softned and sensible soul*; though a stupid Transgressor feels Sin no more than a stone does a Mountain, that lies upon it ; yet when once the Heart of Stone is turned into a Heart of Flesh, Sin presently becomes very burthensome. He that has a *new Heart and a new Spirit* given him, will have *new and other apprehensions* of Sin, he will look upon Sin with sorrow, and himself with self-abhorrency, *Ezek. 36. 26, 31. A new Heart will I give you, a new Spirit will I put within you. Then shall ye remember your evil wayes and your doings that have not been good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations.* David could not make light of sin, when once convinced of its evil by the Spirit ; he grieves because he had offended God ; he fears his wrath that he had deserved ; and earnestly implores compassion and favour. His Sin lay very hard upon him, *Psal. 38. 4, 6. Mine iniquities are gone over my head,*

as an heavy burthen, they are too heavy for me; I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long.

2. Sin is a weight unto the damned in Hell: that tis so, I know; but how weighty, I cannot express, no mind on Earth is able to conceive. Sin is the weight which has sunk all the Souls that are there into that place of Wo; and because sin will ly upon them for ever, they shall never be able to rise up under it. In Hell there is a full, a general, an everlasting Conviction, that *sin is heavy*. If we could discourse with the rich Man, who as the Gospel tells us is in Hell, and ask him, whether his Gluttony, Pride, contempt of God, hatred of Holiness, are *light* or *weighty*? Oh! what would that Tongue that cryed out for a drop of Water, answer to such a question? Surely none in Hell can makelight of sin which brought them thither.

3. Sin is a weight which *burthens the whole Creation*. Hard-hearted Man groans not under it, when the whole Creation besides does. The Creatures were made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Rom. 8. 20. and v. 22. We know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together even until now. And all these travelling pains, they are the effects of Sin. Solomon in the Book of Ecclesiastes, uses several very significant expressions: *Vanity of Vanities, all is vanity*; and *all things are full of labour*; *Man cannot utter it*. And again, *there are many things that increase vanity*. When Sin entred into the World it made a sad alteration in it, well may the Creatures groan under it; and though their pains are terrible, pains of travel; yet because such pains, they are hopeful, and will issue in a *restoration*, which will certainly be, for God has said it. He has told us thus much, that the Creature shall be delivered from the *Bondage of*



*Corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Children of God; Rom. 8. 21. But the manner of this Restauration, he has not told us: Gods silence should repress inquisitive Curiosity.*

4. Sin was found a Weight by Jesus the Mediator. He undertook (and 'twas well for us he did) to bear this Burthen, and no Shoulders but his could have born it; but when he bore it, how did he groan under it! This put him into an Agony, this made him Sweat, and Sweat drops of Blood. This made him cry out, *my Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death: And, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Oh! blessed Saviour, what extorted such cryes as these from Thee? Oh! Sinner, *It was thy Sin, and the Sins of all others whom I save, that lay so hard upon Me, Isa. 53. 6. All we like Sheep, sayes the Prophet, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the Iniquity of us all.* If the Man Christ Jesus had not been the Eternal Son of God, he could never have born such an heavy Load; as all the Sins of his whole Church laid upon him at once all together.

5. God himself complains of Sin as a weighty thing, which He is very weary of, *Isa. 43. 24. Thou hast made me to serve with thy Sins, and hast wearied me with thine Iniquities.* And, *Amos 2. 13. Behold I am pressed under you, as a Cart is pressed that is full of Sheaves.* Sin is a Burthen to the Almighty, tho he be so rich and abundant in Forbearance and Long-suffering. Nay, Sin will make Duties to be a Burthen to Him, *Isa. 1. 13, 14. Bring no more vain Oblations, your Sabbaths and calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with, it is Iniquity even the Solemn Meeting. Your new Moons, and your appointed Feasts, my Soul hateth; they are a Trouble to me, I am weary to bear them.* And 'tis observable, when the Lord comes to a Resolution

tion to punish Sinners, because of their Transgressions, He speaks as One about to ease himself of a Load, Isa. 1. 24. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, the mighty one of Israel: Ah! I will ease me of my Adversaries, and avenge me of my Enemies.* If Sin be thus a Weight, I advise all to be weary, and beg to be eased of it. He is a senseless Fool indeed, who makes a Mock of Sin, and still goes on to add unto his own Burthen.

In the second place. I shall shew you *how the Master Sin may be known*: And here I would premise these three things:

1. All Sin that is *allowed of*, may truly be said to *Reign*, where 'tis allowed. A Man that wilfully continues in the Commission of any Sin, is certainly the Servant of it, whatever it be. 'Tis the Misery of the unregenerate, that they have, *tot Dominos quot vitia*, so many Lusts, so many Lords.

2. There is in many Persons a *particular Sin*, which does prevail more than any other. In the Natural Body there are all the Humours, yet One commonly is *Predominant*, and the Denomination is from *that*. Thus 'tis in the Body of Sin; tho there is a Mass of all Corruption; yet there may be some special Corruption, that has the greatest strength and prevalence. This in Scripture is called, the *sweet Sin*, in which the greatest delight is taken, compared to a *sweet Morsel* under the Tongue, Job 20. 12, 13. *Tho wickedness is sweet in his Mouth, tho he hide it under his Tongue, tho he spare it and forsake it not*; yet at last it proves extremely bitter, deadly as the *very Gall of Asps* within him.

3. There are some in whom *several Sins* are so *Predominant*, that 'tis hard to determine which is

*most Master.* Some have so hot an *Anger*, and so hot and furious a *Lust*, that you cannot so easily judge, which of these is hottest. Nay, in some, Sins that seem very *contrary* one to another, yet in several respects they will both prevail. Many a Man is liberal and *profuse*, as to his *Ornaments* and *Cloathing*; he spends freely in the *Sumptuous* furnishing of his Table; Hand and Purse are open, if he be in *Riotous Company*. Yet if you ask this Man but for a little, to a good use: Tell him that the *Members of Christ* are many of them very *needy*; and that he who gives to the Poor, lends unto the Lord; here he is strangely *Covetous* and close *Fisted*. These things premised, I shall discover the *Master Sin*.

1. That is a Master Sin, unto which the *Constitution* does most strongly incline. They that are of a *Sanguine* Complexion, are inclined to *Lasciviousness*, *Voluptuousness*, and an airy frothiness of Spirit, which is a great hinderance unto serious Impressions. In the *Cholerick* Passion and Anger are apt to prevail, and to hurry them to revengeful words and Actions; not considering what injury they do to others, and how much more to themselves. The *Melancholick* are prone to Envy, Malice, Discontent: The *Flegmatick* unto Stupidity, Carelesness and Sloth. Now Satan takes notice of the Complexion, sails with the Stream of it, and suits his Bait to it; and hereby has very great advantage. Tho no sin has the *Dominion* in Believers; for they are not under the Law, but under Grace, Rom. 6. 14. yet the Complexion Sin is apt sometimes to master even them also; therefore they had need to be watchful against it, and to take great care and pains to mortify it. The Apostle Paul observes his own Constitution, and makes conscience of keeping under his Body that his

his Temperament might not be his Temptation, 1 Cor. 9. ult. *I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means, when I have Preached unto others, I my self should be a cast-away.*

2. That is a Master-sin, unto which your Callings and Conditions make you most liable. They that trade in the World, how apt are they through the Corruption of their own Hearts, to defraud and overreach; to get immoderate and dishonest gain: hence that strict Prohibition, 1 Thes. 4. 6. *Let no man go beyond or defraud his Brother in any matter, knowing that the Lord is the Avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you, and testified.* How apt are they, to venture upon the Sin of Lying and Equivocation, for advantage, and they teach and command their Servants and Children to follow their pernicious Examples; as if Earthly gain were so considerable, that 'tis no great matter how many Souls are lost for the sake of it. They that are Rich in this World, are prone to be high-minded, and to trust in uncertain Riches, 1 Tim. 6. 17. *to withhold the Hire from the poor Labourers; to live in wantonness and pleasure,* Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3. *to be full and deny God, and say, Who is the Lord?* They that are poor in the World, are prone to Steal; (all unjust dealing, is Stealing, an unjust action makes a Man a Thief in Gods account) and to take the Name of God in vain, Prov. 30. 9.

3. That is a Master-sin, which the Sinner is most unwilling should be brought to light, and cannot bear to be reprov'd for. We read, Job. 3. 20. *Every one that doth Evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reprov'd; but of all others, he cannot endure to be reprov'd for the Sin that easily besets him, and that he loves most. He tramples the Pearl of reproof under his Feet, and is ready*

to turn again, and *rend* the reprovcr. *John* the Baptist was a *burning and a shining Light*. *Herod* the King heard him, some of his Exhortations and Doctrines went down with *Herod*, and produced a partial Reformation. At length the Baptist comes home, and strikes at the Master Sin, tells *Herod* of his *Herodias*, and that it was *not lawful for him to have his Brothers Wife*. This was not to be born, the King counted the Prophet *too bold* to meddle with his beloved Lust. He hears him no longer, he suffers him to Preach to others no longer. He first puts him into Prison, and afterwards puts him to Death, and thus was this burning and shining Light extinguished, *Mar. 6. 17, — 27.*

4. The Master Sin, *Conscience when awakened by distress, is very apt to accuse the Sinner of, and furiously to fly in his face for.* Conscience though it sleeps in a Calm, usually awakes in a Storm; when Death-threatening Affliction lies hard upon the Sinner, and he looks beyond Death unto Judgment, and into Eternity; then Conscience speaks plainly; rebukes boldly, and especially the Master-Sin makes it very clamorous. *Envy* was a Sin Predominant in *Josephs Brethren*, they could not bear the thoughts of his future advancement; they sold him for a Slave, to prevent his being exalted over them, as was presignified by his Dreams. Many years after, God calls for a Famine upon the Land; down go these Brethren into *Egypt* to buy Food, there *Joseph* seizes them, deals hardly with them, and they are in great Distress. Conscience now awakes, with great terrour flies in their Faces; and their envy and cruel dealing with *Joseph* their Brother, comes to remembrance with great anguish and trouble, *Gen. 42. 21, 22. They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our Brother; in*  
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that we saw the anguish of his Soul, when he besought us and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us, therefore behold also is his blood required. Conscience does Comment upon Affliction, and has its terrible glosses. These blows are given thee for thy secret filthiness, for thy intemperance, for thy injustice, for thy earthlimindedness, for thy doing the Work of God Heartlessly and negligently! Observe what Conscience now says, for the Master Sin it takes special notice of.

5. That is a Master Sin, which when the Sinner is almost persuaded to be a Convert, hinders him from being a Convert altogether. That Jacob might have Corn, he was contented that ten of his Sons should go and fetch it; but how loath was he to let Benjamin go! When a Sinner is convinced of the necessity of Conversion, he may consent to part with two or three or ten Sins; but that which is most beloved, he hugs still, that Sin and he must never part. When the Soul is ready to be espoused to Christ. This Sin stands up and forbids the Banns. We read of a young man in the Gospel, soberly inclined; he saw the necessity of eternal Life and the value of it; he comes to Jesus, and says, *Good Master, What shall I do that I may inherit eternal Life?* Our Lord tells him of the commands, the young man is glad of this, for as to the letter of the second-Table-precepts; he had been a strict observer of them all from his Youth up. At length our Lord, who knew Love to the World was his Master Sin; bids him to go and sell all that he had on Earth, and follow him, and he should have a more enduring and better Treasure in Heaven. But his Love to the World hindred his Believing and Conversion, he goes away very sorrowful, for he was very rich, Mat. 19. 21, 22. His Riches were very unreasonably and excessively loved, he cleaves to Mammon, and leaves the only Saviour!

6. That

6. That is a Master Sin, which pretends *most highly* to consult the Sinners safety, gain, and pleasure. To be safe, to be advantaged, and delighted, are things very taking to Humane Nature; pretences this way are prevalent, but all Sins pretences are vain. When our Lord commands that the *right eye* should be *plucked out*, the *right hand* cut off; the meaning is not, that Christianity binds us cruelly to dismember our selves: Indeed the abuse of our members is severely forbidden, but our members themselves are not to be parted with, but employed after an holy manner. That therefore which our Lord intends is this, either, that we should be *as without an eye*, to behold vanity and tempting Objects; *as without an hand* to work that which is evil. Or, that though Sin be naturally as dear to us as our right eye; as seemingly necessary as our right hand; yet we must part with it, and not spare it to the hazard and ruine of our selves for ever, *Mat. 5. 29, 30.* I might also add, that Sinners are apt above all to *wish*, that the Master Sin were *no Sin* at all. And because the Law forbids it, they hate the Law; and the motions of their wicked Hearts towards it are more strong and violent. And here is a notable difference between an *unsanctified*, and a *sanctified* Heart. The unsanctified Heart wishes that the Law were *less Holy*, that *Sins* were *no Sins*; but the Heart that is sanctified, does not desire the Law were *less strict and pure*, but that *it self* were *more pure*, and more conformed unto a Law that is so good and excellent; it does not desire a Liberty to commit Sin, but that all the remaining lustings of the Flesh that way, were more thoroughly mortified.

In the third place, I am to produce the *Reasons* why this Master Sin ought *especially* to be abandoned.

I. Be



1. Because, this is *Gods Principal Enemy*. All Sin is against him, but *this* is a special Provocation in the eyes of his Holiness and Glory. The Apostle tells us that *Love* is the *greatest Grace*; and Christ himself says, that *Love* is the *first and great Commandment*: The Master Sin, which is most beloved, which takes away the affection of the Heart, which God chiefly requires; must needs provoke Him unto great Jealousie. This is the *Presumptuous Sin*, 'tis greatly offensive, for deservedly 'tis called the *great Transgression*, Psal. 19. 13.

2. The Master Sin should be abandon'd, because in a special manner it *separates between God, and the Soul that is guilty of it*. Sin has many bad effects, but a worse can't be named than this, *Isa. 59. 2. Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear*. Let the *Saints in Heaven* speak what 'tis to see the *Face of God*! Oh the evil that is in Sin, which causes the Face of God to be *hid* from the Sinner! Every Sin may be compared to a cloud; but the Sin which does most easily beset us, is the blackest, the darkest cloud of all, which does most totally deprive us of the Light of Gods Countenance.

3. If the Master-Sin be not abandon'd, *no other Sin whatsoever, can be truly repented of*. A man may indeed *abstain* from some Sins, but he does not *abstain* from them, *as Sins*, and because they are *displeasing* to God; because contrary to his will, and because they hinder Communion with God; if he did, then certainly he would keep himself from the *beloved Sin*, which is principally hateful to God, and the grand obstruction of fellowship with Him.

4. The Master Sin should be abandon'd, because this is *so great a grief unto the Holy Spirit of God*. How often

often does he tell the false Professour of his lying Tongue! and the unjust Professour of his unrighteous dealing! The good Spirit vouchsafes to strive with very wicked men, and moves them to hate the Sin which they unreasonably Love to their own ruine. But if Sin be loved still, the Spirit is grieved and vexed. And is it safe to grieve and vex the Sanctifier, the Comforter? No. Read what follows upon vexing the Spirit, *Isa. 63. 10. But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their Enemy, and he fought against them.*

5. The Master Sin should be abandon'd, because 'tis this chiefly that keeps the Lord Jesus out of the Throne. Why do so many say in their Hearts, *we will not have Christ to Reign over us?* The reason is, because they are resolved their *fleshy* and their *wordly Lusts* shall rule there still. And if Christ rule not, 'tis in vain to expect he will save, for he is the *Author of Eternal Salvation unto them that obey him*, *Heb. 5. 9.* Nay, as he will not save them that will not be subject to him, so he has threatned to *slay* them. As for those mine Enemies, that would not I should reign over them, bring them forth, and slay them before me, *Luk. 19. 27.*

I come in the last place to the *Application*, and the *Uses* are these three.

USE I. By way of *Examination*: Try your selves, whether you are willing to abandon the Sin that does so easily beset you: and for you your help in this matter, I would ask you,

1. Are you willing to have this Sin, whatever it be, discover'd? Are you willing that God should signifie to you, what 'tis in you that most of all displeases him? Job professes that he cover'd not his Transgression, as Adam, by hiding his Iniquity in his Bosom, *Job.*

31. 33. He that *hides Sin, loves it*; he that pleads for Sin, is a Servant, a Slave to it. The *defence* of Sin, is worse than the *Offence* it self. Can you come to God, and say, *Lord! I open my Heart to Thee. Search, Ransack here; Let no sin lye concealed! Let not so much as one be spared, but especially discover the Master-sin, which is my greatest Enemy, as well as thine.*

2. Are you willing to hear all the Evil the Word does speak against the Master-sin? If so; this would argue that 'tis no longer loved. 'Tis a Sign of malice towards our Neighbour, if we are glad to hear all the Evil that is spoken of him, and all the Reproach that is cast upon him. 'Tis a Sign of hatred to Sin, when we like to have it discovered, when we like that its deceitful and damnable Nature should be represented, and the falseness, foulness, and filthiness of it should be laid open and naked. Sin is so great an Evil, that there cannot be too much Evil spoken of it; 'tis so great an Enemy, that you can never too faithfully and plainly be warned against it.

3. Do you apprehend your greatest danger to be from your Master Sin? and therefore continually endeavour the Mortification of it? The King of Syria give this Commission to his Army, *Fight neither against small nor great, save onely with the King of Israel.* What? were all besides to be spared? No certainly, many *Israelites* fell in the battel: But there was a principal design to take at least, if not to cut off the King of Israel. All Sin deserves thy hatred, no Sin is so small an Enemy as that thou mayest safely spare it. But the Master Sin is the chief foe, therefore its destruction should chiefly be designed. That Man that is an Enemy to his Master Sin desires it may be still weakened by all means. Oh! saith he, that every Mercy may help to kill it! leading me to Repentance for it! That every stroke of the Rod may help to strike it more dead! that every Sermon may give this Sin a blow! that by every Prayer I may obtain more strength against it! That every time I come to the Table of the Lord, this Sin may be in a greater measure Crucified!

USE II. Of Exhortation. And of this there are two Branches.

I shall speak to *Sinners*, that are under the full Power of their Master Sin.

Then I shall speak to *Saints*, in whom there are too great remainders of it.

1. I am to speak to *Sinners* who are under the full Power of their Master Sin. It is storied concerning *Agrippina* the Mother of *Nero Caesar*, that it was told her by an Oracle, that her Son should be Emperour of *Rome*, but afterwards should kill his own Mother. *Agrippina* replies, *Occidat, modo imperet!* Let him kill me, so he does but reign. O 'tis the Language of all presumptuous Sinners concerning their Master Lusts, *Let them but reign, no matter though they are our Damnation and Destruction!* But what do you see in Sin, or in its Wages, that any of you should be thus fond of its Service? What good reason can be given, why Sin should have one slave in this whole Congregation? or in the whole World? I earnestly exhort you to lay aside every weight, but especially the Sin that does most easily beset you. Arguments to perswade are these.

1. Consider, the Master Sin is the strongest hold of Satan. While Sin keeps up its Dominion, Satan holds fast his Possession. This Sin is your most deadly disease, and the strongest Cord, in which the Devil binds you and leads you Captive at his Pleasure.

2. The Master Sin is the great hindrance of the efficacy of the means of Grace. This makes the Preachers pains, lost labour; this makes Mercies and Afflictions to be lost upon you; this makes you to lole all the duties you perform.

3. This Master Sin is not without its Train. A great Person, especially a Crown'd Head, is not without a great many that attend him! A Master Sin has a great Attendance: Many lusts are subservient to this Main one, that the greater and more plentiful Provision may be made for the fulfilling it. How great is thy danger who hast so many Enemies lodging in thee, and lording it over thee!

4. Suppose, this Master Sin were alone, this were enough to ruine thee. If a Pistol is discharged at the Heart, and a small Bulleter enter there; it kills as certainly as if there were a thousand Cannons discharged at a man at once. One Sin suffered to rule in thy Heart is sufficient were there no more, effectually and eternally to ruine thee.

5. The Master Sin wars against thy Soul most dangerously, and wounds most deeply. And after it has ruined thee, Oh with what anguish will it be reflected on in the lowest Hell! This will be there thy heaviest load! Thou wilt remember how deaf thou wert to all Counsel to cast it away, and how great thy madness was, in taking most pleasure in that, which proves the cause of the greatest, even

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even everlasting Sorrow and Vexation. Oh be so wise, as to change your old Master, Sin; and let Christ become your Lord.

2. I am to speak to *Saints*, in whom there are *too great remainders* of the Sin that was once their Master. I exhort you more effectually and thoroughly to mortify it. Pray consider,

1. If this Sin does frequently prevail, it will keep you very low in Grace. Faith will be weak, Hope will be damp't, Love will be cool; and the whole inward Man will woefully languish.

2. As you will be weak in Grace, so will be low in Comfort. When Temptations are yielded to, Conscience will be disquieted; Peace will be disturbed; Thy Pride, thy Passion, thy carnal Affections prevailing, will make thy Heart too much like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast forth mire and dirt, Isa. 57. 20.

3. The Prevalency of this easily besetting Sin, will hinder you from being so serviceable to your great and gracious Lord. It will make his work to be neglected; and when done, to be done too negligently: sorry Servants you will be, and very sorry your services will be. The more sanctified you are, the fitter you are for your Masters use, 2 Tim. 2, 21. but Sin makes you unmeet, and more unable and unwilling to serve him.

4. This Sin will make you to shine less in your lives; 'twil fully your Conversations, and hinder you from adorning the Gospel. Oh keep unsporting, and walk exactly as in the day; that you may be blameless and harmless the Children of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, and that you may shine as Lights in the World, Phil. 2. 15.

5. This Sin may cause you to set in a Cloud. It may fill you with doubts when you are dying, and that will be very dreadful. You may be terribly frightened with the fears of Hell, when you are just at Heavens gate. Be therefore upright, keep your selves from the iniquity that does most easily beset you; that you may be more useful in your lives, have the stronger and more lively hope in Death; and that your End when it comes may be more perfect Peace.

USE III. Of Direction: How the Sin which does most easily beset you, may be laid aside.

1. Pray for a clean Heart, Psal. 51. 10. David having been overcome by a strong Corruption, and done a Deed that was very foul, cries for a purer Heart, a more right and constant Spirit; he knew that to purge the Fountain, was the way to have the streams clean: Go unto God for a new Heart, which he has promised, and will give to all who prize and desire such an Heart. Strike at the root of Sin in the Heart, then the branches, and this top branch, the Master-sin will wither.

2. Seri-

2. Seriously lay to Heart, how much the Sin that naturally is *belov'd*, does deserve your hatred: Hated Sin is so weak; that it can ruine none; 'tis the love of Sin that gives it power, and as it were puts a Sword into its hand to slay you.

3. Resist the very first stirrings of this Sin in you: I believe if David as soon as ever he beheld from his Palace the beauteous Bathsheba, had presently turn'd away his eyes, and had fallen upon his knees, and gone to Prayer, he had overcome the Temptation. Sin is more weak at the beginning: Our Lords Counsel is, *Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into temptation*, Mat. 26. 41.

4. If you would abandon the Master-sin, *Pray much for the contrary Grace*: Is Pride thy Master-sin? Pray much for Humility; Is Passion thy Master-sin? Pray much for Patience, and for the Meekness and Gentleness of Christ: Is Love to the World thy Master-sin? Pray that thou may'st rise with Christ, and love, and mind a better World; better Honours, better Pleasures, a more lasting Wealth than this World can yield.

5. Let the Word of God, which does forbid and threaten this Master-sin, be carefully hid in your Heart: This Word may be in thy Mouth, thou mayest talk of it; it may be in thy Mind, thou mayest have a notional Knowledge of it: Nay, it may go further, and be in thy Conscience, and be thought of in the very act of Sin. But if it be in thy Heart, if thy Will and Affections are taken with it, then it will be an effectual Preservative against Iniquity, *Psal. 119. 11. Thy Word have I hid in my Heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

6. Improve the Death of our Lord Jesus: Bring the Sin which does so easily beset you to the Cross of Christ. No Sin truly dyed but upon Christs Cross, *Gal 5. 24. They that are Christs, have Crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*; these are never Mortified but by being Crucified. How can the old Adam dye, but upon the Cross of the second Adam? *Rom. 6. 6. Knowing this, that our old man is Crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

7. Call in the Spirits aid: He can make the Word sharp as a two-edged Sword to pierce the Heart, and to slay the strongest Sin there: He glorifies Christ, and can draw you to him, and enable you by Faith to derive Grace from him, sufficient to help you against the most powerful Corruptions: He can kill the Sin that is hardest to be slain; he can mortifie all the deeds of the body, *Rom. 8. 13. the strongest members on the Earth*, *Col. 3. 5.* and he can seal you unto the day of Redemption.

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